



## 'Vienna' isn't always Strauss

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## Courtyards of Old Beijing

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# Spring for stimulus



National People's Congress Spokesman Li Zhaoxing was lighthearted while discussing the annual agenda for the annual legislative meeting Wednesday. But Premier Wen Jiabao took a more serious tone yesterday when he declared that the country can ride out the unprecedented challenges facing the global economy. "We are fully confident that we will overcome difficulties and challenges, and we have the conditions and ability to do so," Wen said. His forecast for the year's economy is 8 percent growth.

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# Survey finds migrants' children carry no permanent records

By Venus Lee

The more migrant workers who come to the city seeking work, the more schools needed to accept their children. However, a survey from the Chinese Juvenile Rights Protection Center (CJRPC) showed the conditions of their schools are poor, and most of the children lacked a permanent record.

The survey was conducted from last August to this January. The 41 schools investigated were located in the urban and rural areas connecting Fengtai, Chaoyang, Haidian, Changping and Shijingshan districts. The survey found 21 schools were ineligible for a "Non-governmental School License."

"There are only 7 schools keeping students' permanent records," Zhang Xuemei, the vice director of the CJRPC, said. The lack of a permanent record means the students are not treated the same as locals.

"Some 71 percent of the students have no access to the welfare policies available to middle and primary school students, such as discounts on railway and bus fares, park admissions and medical care. It will also cause problems when they move to another city hoping to continue their studies," Zhang said.

The statistics from the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education showed 63 percent of the children are getting compulsory education in state-run schools, while 37 percent study in nongovernmental schools.

However, 73 percent of the students in these schools are unhappy with their conditions, and more than half of them wish they could attend a state-run school for the better education many of their peers



The classrooms of migrant workers' children are crowded and humble.

Photo by Lili Chen

take for granted.

The report also said these schools were crowded and simple, with crude desks, no air conditioning or heating, limited athletic facilities and poor sanitation.

Almost all schools were on rented land, and they paid their teacher very little. Almost 30 percent of the 442 teachers surveyed earned less than 800 yuan a month; 65 percent earned 800 to 1,200 yuan.

Some 83 percent of the schools never paid social insurance for their faculty.

"Although the government has been

protecting the educational rights of migrant workers' children and encourages nongovernmental agencies to run schools, the conditions and quality of teaching lag far behind their state-run peers. I hope the government can bring these unproven private schools into the national compulsory education system. They need a way to support and promote these schools, to increase student's subsidies, to keep a permanent record and to raise faculty pay," Zhang Xiaohu, the headmaster of one of the schools, said.

The education commission said the government has increased investment in educating the children of migrant workers. Most approved private schools receive government aid in the forms of computers, desks, heating equipment and fire-fighting devices.

"This year, the government will subsidize students in approved private schools and help to improve their learning conditions, and strengthen supervision of unapproved schools," Xian Lianping, the commission's spokesman, said.

## Doctors urged to quit smoking

By Han Manman

The government is asking male doctors to stop smoking to set a good example for the nation's 350 million smokers, millions of whom die each year from related diseases.

"Medical workers and those who make decisions regarding people's health should take the lead to quit smoking and completely ban indoor smoking to set a good example for their patients," Health Minister Chen Zhu said at a news conference Sunday as he launched a campaign to discourage smoking among medical staff.

The campaign, started early this week, aims to make medical schools, hospitals and associations smoke-free by the end of the

year. It is supported by 10 health associations and 10 universities.

About 56.8 percent of male doctors in the country smoke. The country is home to the most smoking male doctors, according to the China Preventive Medicine Association (CPMA).

Despite finding success in a "smoke-free" Olympics last year, the country continues to face difficulties getting its citizens to kick the killer habit due to lack of relevant legislation, poor policy implementation and abysmal awareness, Chen said.

One in 350 Chinese smokers perishes every year, according to CPMA.

"International experience has shown that

when doctors can kick the habit, it will help motivate their patients," Chen said.

Hans Troedsson, the WHO's China representative, said the campaign comes at a time where the need for better health is more apparent than ever.

Wang Chen, head of the Beijing Chaoyang Hospital, said his hospital has set up a tobacco-free bonus for smoking doctors. Doctors who fail to quit smoking will have the bonus deducted from their salaries by the end of this year.

Here in the world's largest tobacco market, 2 trillion cigarettes are sold each year. Chinese cigarettes are among the world's cheapest, with packs priced at a couple yuan.

## Water Cube's price cuts to benefit elderly foreigners

By Jin Zhu

The water cube began offering half-price access to its facilities to senior citizens last year, and now it will adjust the policy to extend the discount to foreign senior citizens, Water Cube management said this week.

Five elderly people from Brazil who traveled from the National Stadium were refused discount tickets on Monday. After negotiating with the ticket seller failed, they were forced to purchase full-price tickets despite having shown their identity cards.

According to the ticket office, the policy, which began December 26, extends a half-price discount to Chinese senior citizens over age 60 who produce valid documentation issued by the government. People over age 70 can enter for free.

"The five people were refused because the current law has no specific rules for foreigners," Sun Chen, deputy manager from the Operations Department of the National Aquatic Center, said.

Sun said the company realized the policy had problems, and that the issue of foreign visitors was never considered.

"However, it was only an isolated case and can be solved easily. It was obvious the men should not have been excluded from purchasing the half-price tickets. We will amend this in future revisions," he said.

In the mean time, the company has assigned staff members to receive elderly foreigners. "Extra receptionists are expected to help foreign senior citizens to purchase the reduced rate tickets after their certificates are examined and approved," Sun said.

## Gov bans lie detector from TV show

By Han Manman

Seeing through a liar, while a useful skill, seems to be something Chinese government does not want as part of the nation's prime time programming.

Last Sunday, many viewers were tune in to catch the first episode of a new reality show "Proof" by Jiangsu Satellite TV, which would use a lie detector to test whether the interviewee was lying. But the show never aired.

Zhou Rong, producer of Jiangsu Satellite TV, said they were told by the State Administration of Radio, Film, and Television (SARFT) just two days before the scheduled debut that the use of lie detectors on TV shows was prohibited.

"Speak Your Mind," another highly rated TV show produced by Zhejiang Satellite TV, also received a warning that

ordered them to remove the lie detector segment from their program.

Chen Tian, producer of "Speak Your Mind," said they first introduced the instrument to solve problems effectively.

"Most of the time, we used the lie detector when it was hard to judge who was telling the truth. Some guests even asked us to use a lie detector to prove what they said," Chen said, adding that the lie detector was just a secondary tool and not central to the show.

SARFT said TV programs that use lie detectors as a gimmick mostly discuss emotional issues like marriage, family and love. It's hard to judge who is right based on someone's ability to lie.

Lie detectors, also known as polygraph machines, do not always provide accurate results, and can be thrown off if a subject is

nervous about his surroundings-like when he or she is being filmed before a studio audience. If misused, the device may not only fail to solve problems, but can bring crisis to a shaky relationship and mislead home viewers.

An employee in Zhejiang Satellite TV said he saw a couple break up a recording session because the polygraph results suggested her husband was a liar.

"There is ongoing debate about lie detectors both in China and abroad. It does not accurately detect truth or deception. The test's propensity for false positives is precisely why job screeners never picked it up. If used improperly, it's easy to convict the innocent or give a free pass to a liar," said Wu Boxin, a polygraph expert from Chinese People's Public Security University.



# Mass karaoke in Changchun goes for Guinness record

By Zhang Dongya

Thousands of karaoke enthusiasts in Changchun, Jilin Province, have sung nonstop for more than 10 days and nights to challenge the Guinness world record. The current record – 446 hours – was set in Finland last year. The results will be available Wednesday.

The mass karaoke event, organized by the Changchun-based *New Culture Daily* and started February 20, is expected to continue through March 11. Its goal is 456 hours, 10 hours longer than the previous record. The group has not decided whether or not to continue after that.

More than 2,000 people have participated in the karaoke marathon, and another 1,000 are expected to join.

"We expected more college students to join in, but not many came since they were still on winter vacation when we started," Dong Jing, the spokeswoman for the event said. "Now,

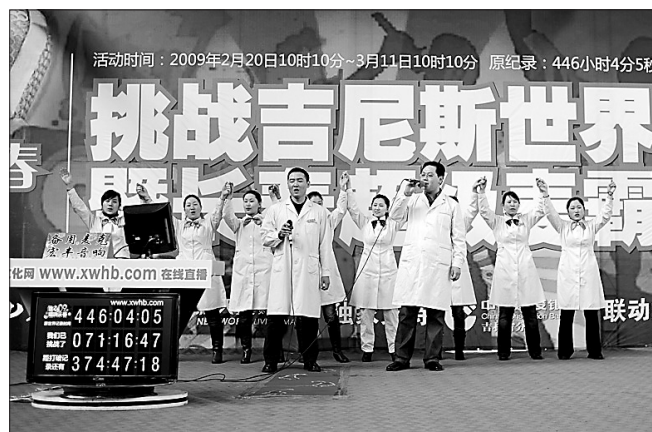
more students are joining in since the vacation has ended. The 'night singers' are mostly from the colleges."

The club prepared 300 songs, including military songs, movie themes, folk songs and pop songs. Guinness rules say every participant must sing a song longer than three minutes, and without making a mistake. The interval between two songs may not exceed 30 seconds.

Most applicants are young people who are fond of singing karaoke in their spare time, and some old people came to sing along to the classics.

Guinness rules required that no song be repeated within a two hour timeframe. The Finns broke the previous record in their 446th hour and stopped there.

The karaoke record has been beaten back and forth between China and Finland for years. The Finns first broke China's record of 145 straight hours of karaoke in 2007, but the Chinese fought



Doctors and nurses from Changchun Central Hospital join in the Karaoke marathon. Photo provided by New Culture Daily

back weeks later to secure a world record with 214 hours. Last year, the Finns decided to go for broke and planned to not only break the Chinese record, but to aim for 600 hours. They secured the record, though a technical error halted the effort at 446 hours.

If successful, the karaoke battle will be on again. Wu Xiao-

hong, representative of Guinness World Records in China, will come to Changchun to observe the moment they break the record on March 11.

The whole event is being recorded and supervised by the local notary office employees. They are also streaming a live feed of the competition on their Web site.

## Sign chides young lovers bound for hourly hotels

By Wang Yu

An announcement posted at the gate of Xiang-zhangyuan, a residence community in Xianlin, Nanjing, chided student lovers who came to stay in apartment hotels last week.

The letter read: "Don't ruin your future and yourself only for your childish love."

Xianlin is Nanjing's university district, and is located far from its downtown. Hotels which charge by the hour have long made a business of catering to enrolled lovers who want more privacy than their crowded dorms can offer. Most of the cheap hotels are actually apartments owned by nearby residents and are registered with the local hotel agency.

In any university town, the rooms are a hot business. Many old women are recruited by the landlords to advertise vacancies on the street. Their job is introduce the room's conditions to prospective clients.

It did not take long for the open letter to find its way to the Internet. A few days later, a reply was posted by an anonymous student at Xianlin area. "I check into these hotels three times a week with my girlfriend, and we have been in almost every hourly hotel in the area," he said.

In the original letter, the writer said students let their parents down when they rent a hotel room with their lover. "You don't even know my parents, let alone their hopes for me. They know I have a girlfriend and like her very much. They know we've been living together and all they want is for me to get my degree, get a job and live my own life. I don't think having sex is something which will ruin my future," a student wrote in reply.

"I think whoever wrote the announcement is arrogant," said Huang Shan, a college student in Beijing. "You can't force me to share your values. As adults, students have the right to make their own decisions."

But many residents support the writer but not necessarily because they agree.

According to Xiang-zhangyuan's property management, there can be as many as 300 couples renting vacant rooms each day: something which causes trouble for the management. Some of the students tamper with the security system to enter the area.

Other respondents were more understanding, as long as the students do not do anything to disturb the community.

## Olympic fou drums on auction

The first auction of fou drums used in the opening of the Beijing Olympic Games will be held Sunday. The first round will auction 910 fou in sets at Beijing Equity Exchange.

"Each one has a unique number... BOCOG will not make new fou drums in the future. The mold for making the fou drums will also be destroyed, so each one is unique. There will be no duplicates," Liang Yu, the exchange's vice general manager, said.

The reference price for each drum is about 1,000 yuan. Dozens of fou will be auctioned via the Internet at jinmajia.com to accommodate individual buyers.

(By Venus Lee)



## Quake area moms report miscarriages

By Annie Wei

Many repeat mothers in Beichuan, Sichuan Province, an area rocked by last year's earthquake, have reportedly miscarried during their second pregnancy, the local *Tianfu Morning Paper* reported.

He Yunfang, a 33-year-old worker at a local credit union, lost her baby when its heart stopped four months into pregnancy. Her son perished in the earthquake, and she became pregnant again last October, after which her parents moved in to help her with daily chores.

Other pregnant women experienced the same problem: another mom in He's Lamaze class lost her baby. Some of these women, who were in their 20s, received no medical explanation for why they miscarried.

When He contacted the local family planning commission, one of the workers said her sister also recently miscarried.

Qiu Bo, a doctor from Chengdu Women's and Children's Health Care Hospital, said most miscarriages could be attributed to the age of the mother and stress.

Although many pregnant

women tried not to think of their children who passed away during the earthquake, they worried about the healthy situation of the coming babies, how to raise them and provide them a stable living condition.

After the earthquake, the local family planning commission began allowing families who lost their children to have a new baby. According to its data, 1,332 families were planning to have another child as of the end of January. Three of the 51 women registered have miscarried.

However, the data is consid-

ered inaccurate because many families refused to register when the new birth policy took effect last July.

A staff member from local family planning commission said many families refused to be interviewed while they were mourning their children.

Last November, the commission went to the countryside to survey which families planned to have another child. They organized psychologists to talk to new moms in Renjiaping and Leigu counties, and to provide consultations and health checks.



# Witkey

By Jin Zhu

The continuing financial crisis has pushed the global economy into a great depression.

But in the world of witkey, things are different. Urgent demand for extra money has many talented people turning to the Internet for a new avenue to sell their ideas.

## rises in economy's wake

"The most attractive thing about the world of witkey is that people are valued only for their personal ability," Tan Jun, a senior "wei ke" in Beijing, said.

Wei ke, which is rendered as "witkey" in English, are people who exchange services and information, or who share knowledge and experience with others over the Internet for a fee.

For witkey, the only thing that matters is creative ability and ideas, Tan said.



### Economic collapse exposes opportunity

Tan, a graduate student in computer science, has worked as a witkey for the past four years.

Whenever he has time, on weekends or holidays, Tan logs onto witkey sites to post bids.

"Winning a task on a witkey site is often a challenge, since many people are bidding for the job at the same time. For college students, it is a good way to gain experience and earn money," he said.

According to statistics from Zhubajie.com, one of the most famous witkey hubs, the number of registered members exceeds 1 million – and it is still increasing by 20,000 new accounts each day. Nearly 40 percent of the active bidders are college students, and that is always growing.

Unlike professionals with years of experience in their fields, the ideas from these students are imaginative and creative: two things which work on their side while bidding, Tan said.

Like other grad students, he knows 2009 is the toughest year yet for finding work. He hoped to find work by June, but plans changed when he

submitted his witkey profile at one interview.

"Many companies were interested in my experience as a witkey during the first few interviews. After reading what I had worked on, many were eager to schedule a follow-up interview. Now I am less anxious about how hard it will be to find a job," he said.

Besides college students, more and more professionals are flocking to witkey to trade their ideas to make up the slack in their sagging incomes.

Hu Xiaoqian, a local public relation agent, has found many side jobs on the site.

"As a PR professional, I have experience in drafting marketing proposals, which many enterprises – especially the small or newly established ones – need," she said.

Hu earns about 1,000 yuan from each successful proposal, which generally takes a day or two nights to complete.

"Sometimes, I can earn 4,000 to 5,000 yuan per month working online as a witkey, which is more than I earn at my full-time job. It means a lot to me since the financial crisis is worsening," she said.



Witkey, a creative platform for people to make money in their spare time, has grown popular since the financial crisis began.

CFP Photos

### Enterprises eager to use witkey

For Liu Zheng, 26, a designer who works for a multinational enterprise, his hours spent doing witkey jobs have grown over the last year.

"Those who seek solutions online are usually businesspeople from small and medium-sized enterprises. Most of the time, they are looking for logo designs for products or name cards, or for marketing and sales proposals and programming," Liu said.

"I saw more and more enterprises were posting jobs on witkey sites. My chances of making a successful bid seemed better than ever," he added.

The concept is getting increasingly popular. According to Zhubajie.com's listings, many enterprises in the manufacturing industry, especially from the Yangtze River Delta, are bringing outsourcing tasks to witkey, Zhu Mingyue, the founder of the site, said.

Zhu attributed the shift to the global financial crisis. "For manufacturers, many need to establish their own brands instead of processing products for foreign companies. However, cost issues push them to hire witkey designers rather than commission professional firms," he said.

Hu Hui, boss of a medium-sized molder in Cixi, Zhejiang Province, said hiring a witkey is usually more convenient than interviewing professional candidates.

"My firm mainly produced cup molds for German companies before the financial crisis began. Now we are focusing on the domestic market. When I posted my requirements for a logo and marketing proposal on a witkey site, it quickly received more than 10 bids," he said.

Hu said he paid 500 yuan for each design he accepted.

### Still not quite "professional"

While he acknowledged the role of witkey as a complement to traditional sources, He Liping, an economics professor at Beijing Normal University, warned Web operators, buyers and sellers to be ware of the

witkey system's shortcomings: namely payments and violations of intellectual property rights.

"Currently, the system of posting and receiving tasks is far from perfect. Most people who earn money are

just lucky. Unless someone has endless excellent ideas, it would be hard to live as a professional witkey," He said.

Honesty is another problem in the witkey market.

"Although it is not hard to win a bid, some bidders turn

out to be frauds who take your work and run. Some of my designs were used without payment," Liu Zheng, a designer, said.

Three years ago, there were few witkey sites in China. Now there are over

200. But the presence of more sites does not mean the industry has matured – far from it, he warned.

"The dream of working as a professional witkey in China won't come true for a while," he said.



# Economy to dominate Congress agenda

**"We must remain sober-minded, increase our awareness of peril, and lean toward taking a more pessimistic view of trends," Premier Wen Jiabao said in his opening address to the National People's Congress (NPC).**

**The Chinese Parliament began its annual legislative session yesterday and topping the agenda were concerns about how the country would cope with the ongoing global financial crisis and create more job opportunities.**

In the NPC's nine-day session, about the only suspense left is whether the government will propose to add more stimulus spending to the US \$584 billion (4 trillion yuan) that Chinese leaders have already pledged to help the sagging economy.

## Significantly increased spending

Premier Wen Jiabao reaffirmed in his report before the NPC this year's economic growth target of around 8 per cent, but did not announce any additional stimulus plans.

Global markets were buoyed by hopes Wen would use his opening address to the legislature yesterday to announce as much as a doubling in the 4-trillion stimulus plan revealed in November last year.

Wen said boosting domestic demand was key to stimulating the economy and that the government would "significantly increase" investments this year.

The government would stick to its moderately loose monetary policy and its proactive or expansionary fiscal policy, he said.

The premier said China would launch fresh policies to support the domestic property market and spur car purchases, in addition to encouraging private capital flows to the infrastructure, financial and public utilities sectors.

"We need to steadfastly make reversing the downward trend in economic growth the primary goal of macro controls," Wen said.

The premier's annual Government Work Report, the equivalent of a US State of the Union Address, lays out the country's economic roadmap, and this year

pledged support for China's foreign trade, which has been falling since late last year.

The government must not slacken in its efforts to promote exports, and would increase support for imports in advanced technology, resources, energy, raw materials and commodities, Wen said.

## Market response

On Wednesday, share prices around the world jumped amid hopes China would announce an expansion to its economic stimulus plan.

The Shanghai Composite Index closed 6.1 percent higher. Copper futures jumped by the exchange-imposed 5 percent daily limit in Shanghai on optimism demand may pick up in China, the world's biggest consumer of the metal.

US stock indexes were up more than 2 percent; Germany's Dax surged 5.4 percent; France's Cac 40 rose 4.7 percent; and the UK's FTSE 100 added 3.8 percent.

"What is good for China is good for the world," Paul Mendelsohn, chief investment strategist at Windham Financial Services, said.

## Expert view

"The government could enlarge the stimulus plan a bit," Shen Minggao, chief economist for *Caijing*, a China-based business magazine, said in an interview. But he said that fiscal conservatives would be wary of increasing a 2009 budget deficit that already appears headed for a record.

Experts will be closely watching Wen's proposals to see not only how the proposed 4-trillion-yuan stimulus pack-



The opening of the NPC Tuesday attracted world attention.

CFP Photo

age would be used, but how much would actually be new spending. The central government is allotting only about 1.2 trillion yuan of the total; the rest is supposed to come from banks, investors and local governments, whose finances are especially opaque.

Most of the money is set to go to infrastructure projects, like roads and dams, which pump money quickly into the economy. But many outside experts and some party figures are call-

ing for more money to be spent directly on people's basic needs, such as medical care, education and poverty alleviation. The need for more social spending is likely to be vigorously debated at the NPC session.

"There's an overinvestment in infrastructure," Mao Yushi, the head of a Beijing research organization, said in an interview this week. "Money should be directed to help small businesses, for employment and social security, for medical insurance."

## Sidelights

### World media eyes on gov's two sessions

Overseas media are closely watching the two annual sessions of the country's top legislative body and top political advisory body.

The US-based Associated Press (AP) said the two sessions are "the first for China since the worldwide financial meltdown started last year."

"Both are widely expected to yield further measures to stimulate the economy," AP said.

The British news agency Reuters said, "The economy, and maintaining social stability, are at the top of the agenda of China's annual parliament which begins this week."

Meanwhile, France-based AFP reported "both sessions of parliament are set to focus on using a 4-trillion-yuan government stimulus package announced last year that is aimed at boosting economic growth and maintaining social stability."

Singapore newspaper *Lianhe Zaobao* said how the Chinese government responds to the ongoing international financial crisis would be a focus. (Agencies)

### No booze, less food at banquets

(AFP) - China will no longer wine and dine visiting heads of state at sumptuous banquets, cutting back the fare to just one soup, three dishes and no liquor, a senior official said Wednesday.

The scaled-down menu comes as the country implements government savings and encourages thriftiness in the face of the global financial crisis, said Li Zhaoxing, spokesman for the National People's Congress (NPC), which convenes this week.

"When our president ... and prime minister invite foreign heads of state, during the state banquet the menu will not exceed one soup and three dishes," he said. "No Chinese liquor will be served."

Important foreign visitors are usually treated to elaborate banquets featuring fiery liquor in generous quantities.

### Zhang plans film on Communist's founding

(AFP) - Movie director Zhang Yimou, who masterminded the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony, is planning a film to mark the 60th anniversary of the founding of Communist China, Chinese press said.

A script for the movie that will commemorate the 1949 founding of new China is currently being worked out, Zhang told Xinhua news agency on the sidelines of the nation's annual parliamentary session, at which he is a delegate.

Xinhua did not give any other details on the planned film.

As well as directing the spectacular 2008 Games opening ceremony, Zhang is also known for blockbusters such as *Hero* and the *House of Flying Daggers*, and has been nominated three times for an Oscar for Best Foreign Film.

Zhang told Xinhua he is also mulling an invitation to orchestrate a fireworks display for China's October 1 National Day festivities, which will include a grand military parade on Tiananmen Square.

## Highlight

### Smaller defense boost this year

Li Zhaoxing, the NPC's spokesman and a former foreign minister, has revealed a 14.9-percent increase in military spending for 2009.

Li told reporters at a news conference in Beijing Wednesday that the figure was a "modest" increase which would increase the military's capabilities and improve conditions for the 2.3-million members of the world's largest army.

Li said defense spending will reach 480.6 billion yuan, 62.5

billion yuan more than 2008. But the rise is slightly below last year's 17.6-percent increase - and the total is still dwarfed by US' military spending.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates that even when comparative buying power is considered, China spent the equivalent of US \$140 billion (957 billion yuan) for its military in 2007, to the US's \$547 billion. The UK spent the equivalent of US \$54 billion.

SIPRI suggests defense spending in China has risen threefold in real terms over the last decade.

Li said the rise would mainly go towards raising wages and conditions, improving the military's hi-tech ability and enhancing its emergency response capabilities in "disaster relief, fighting terrorism, maintaining stability and other non-warfare military operations."

"China's limited military strength is to protect national

sovereignty and territorial integrity and would not threaten any country," Li said.

A Japanese foreign ministry deputy spokesman, Takeshi Akamatsu, said there were "non-transparent points" in the defense budget. Last year, a Pentagon report suggested China's true budget was two to three times the official figure.

But Li insisted, "There is no such thing as so-called hidden military expenditure in China."

(Agencies)



# Foreign investment in south to slump

Foreign direct investment in southern China may fall 60 percent this year, with regulatory risks and a lack of incentives seen as greater drags on investor confidence than the global financial crisis, according to a survey by the region's American Chamber of Commerce.

Total investments in the area by the companies surveyed were expected to fall to US \$6.5 billion (44.4 billion yuan) this year from US \$11 billion in 2008, the report showed.

Some 551 companies participated in the survey, including

multinationals like Procter & Gamble and Wal-Mart Stores, with collective revenue of US \$26 billion.

"We're seeing signs of weakness, signs of lower investment amounts, but we're also seeing signs of cautious optimism towards the future, and continued expansion of American companies," Harley Seyedin, president of the American Chamber of Commerce (Amcham) in South China, said.

Rather than the crisis itself, however, Amcham said China's sudden and frequent regulatory

shifts including on VAT processing directives over the past year were a key factor for reduced investment confidence among foreign firms.

"There's no doubt that some businesses are unwilling to invest when they don't know how the next regulation is going to affect their next investment."

Amcham also urged authorities to reinstate more investment incentives like tax breaks and land concessions to avoid losing FDI (foreign direct investment) to regional rivals like India and Vietnam.

Despite the closure of tens of thousands of factories and millions of layoffs over the past year, the survey suggested business sentiment remained fairly robust.

Some 92 percent of firms said they were profitable or would be within two years, while 29 percent said the overall business environment had "decreased somewhat" and 5 percent said it had "decreased greatly."

"We have absolutely no sign of any American companies downsizing or closing," Seyedin said.

(Agencies)

## Airbus denies cancelation report



Thomas Burger, marketing manager of plane A380, said at a press conference that Airbus aims high for the Chinese market.

CFP Photo

By Huang Daohen

Airbus, the European aircraft giant, denied a rumor Monday that China pulled out of a deal to buy its 150 planes, which are valued at US \$10 billion (68.4 billion yuan).

An Airbus China executive said in a Monday statement that the company had not signed any framework agreement with the government, and that the order of 150 planes was itself only a rumor. The company said it is still in talks with domestic firms.

The statement came after a Chengdu-based newspaper released the cancelation report last Saturday. But Xinhua news agency later reported that it was a mistranslation of the original story by a US news agency.

According to Xinhua, the paper quoted Bloomberg News as saying: "Airbus does not expect to realize its target, set in 2005, to sell 150 jets to China this year."

But the original story from February 25 said French air-

craft manufacturer has seen its "plans to sign a fourth Chinese order for more than 150 planes since 2005 delayed."

The erroneous article caused a stir among the national media and topped major Web portals over the weekend. Analysts said the attention the report received was a reflection of the sensitivity surrounding Sino-French relations.

Overseas media suggested the pulling out was a warning to France not to harm Sino-French ties. Last week, a trade delegation had signed a slew of procurement contracts worth about US \$13 billion with Germany, Switzerland, Spain and the UK.

The Chinese government refuted the cancelation report Tuesday. The Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), the aviation authority, never made a decision to cancel aircraft orders with Airbus, Qin Gang, spokesman for the Foreign Affairs Ministry, said at a briefing Tuesday.

### Analysis

#### New plane demand sees gray

Though the Airbus cancellation turned out to be a rumor, the demand for new planes is still not optimistic, Wen Yizhong, an industrial analyst with Oriental Securities, said.

Domestic airlines calculate the number of new planes they need on the basis of 15 percent annual growth, he said. For example, 40 planes were contracted for delivery to China Eastern Airlines during 2009 and 2010, with 29 of those delivered in 2009 alone.

But the demand has fallen steeply. Wen estimates that the aviation transportation volume might continue to see negative growth in the first half of this year. Besides, surplus has emerged and will worsen with the delivery of new planes this year and next.

So airlines have to adjust, Wen said. According to media reports, Eastern Airlines is now negotiating with manufacturers to cut the 29 new planes to 13 or 14.

However, this won't be easy, Wen said. The contract said airlines that default on orders must pay a heavy fine, so they are now trying to reduce losses while postponing or canceling orders.

Chinese Business News said Chinese airlines are suggesting that all domestic airlines should negotiate with manufacturers, mainly Airbus and Boeing, using their collective weight to gain manufacturers' understanding and avoid compensation for the postponement.

The aviation authority supports this position. Chinese airlines would respect signed contracts for aircraft orders but would negotiate the timing of those deliveries, Li Jiaxiang, the head of CAAC, said Wednesday.

Chinese airlines are reviewing their need for new aircraft according to the changing market, and they may seek to alter the orders to include more smaller aircrafts, Li said.

### Market watch

#### Local retailers in price war with foreign rivals

Foreign-owned retailers and restaurant chains are resorting to steep discounts to encourage consumers to part with their cash as the economy slows, a move likely to further pressure local rivals.

When Western consumer brands entered the Chinese market in the 1990s, many sought to set themselves apart from local competitors by charging more and presenting the mark-up as the cost of better quality and service.

But facing tough times in their home markets and in a bid to shore up sales, foreign retailers are jumping into a price war to secure their share of the growth of the world's third-largest economy.

McDonald's this month slashed 40 percent of its prices to produce what the hamburger chain calls "the best ever value meal combination" in China. Half its menu items sell for the same price, or less, than they did 10 years ago.

"As demand slows, foreign companies are doing whatever is needed to maintain critical mass and get economies of scale working," said Wang Haitao, an analyst with Shen-yin Wanguo Securities in Shanghai.

For foreign consumer brands, especially supermarkets, the emphasis has switched to top-line sales from bottom-line profits.

Faced with aggressive discounting by their foreign competitors, Chinese retailers such as Beijing-based Wumart have been forced to follow suit – dealing a blow to share prices.

Falling raw material costs are cushioning the impact of the discounts, but Chinese retailers suffer from a compression of margins because they generally operate on a smaller scale than their Western competitors.

Consequently, foreign retailers have profit margin of about 3.6 percent compared with the 1.2 percent of local rivals, giving them more room to discount, said Huang Guoxiong, a professor at Renmin University of China.

#### Best price

But foreign firms see opportunity in reduced prices.

"It is seizing the moment. It's the right time – the consumer is very cost conscious," said Jeff Schwartz, McDonald's chief executive in China.

People tend to spend less on discretionary goods during economic downturns. More than a quarter of urban Chinese are expected to cut back on things such as travel, clothes and eating out, according to a Macquarie survey of 500 consumers in five major cities last December.

#### To cut or not to cut

Chinese consumer firms say they see no choice but to go down the same track as their counterparts to not lose customers.

A day after McDonald's launched its campaign, Yonghe King, a fast food chain known for its soybean milk, cut prices on some items by as much as 22 percent in 100 outlets nationwide.

The government says it supports sales promotions that are based on supply and demand.

"However, overdoing it will have a negative impact," Commerce Minister Chen Deming said recently when asked about foreign companies' discounts. (Agencies)



# Patriotic ruse may cast shadow over art auctions

By Huang Daohen

Some call him a hero and a patriot, but others say his actions were pointless and only sullied the nation's reputation.

Cai Mingchao, a 44-year-old art dealer made the front page of Chinese newspapers this week after he revealed Monday that he was the undisclosed winning bidder of two Chinese relics auctioned off by Christie's last week.

Praise and criticism for him aside, analysts say Cai's action may bring about problems within the art market, and that the sale of Chinese art may drop.



## Profile

Cai Mingchao, 44, is an art collector who owns an auction house in Xiamen, Fujian Province. He is an adviser to China's National Treasures Fund, which seeks to retrieve looted national treasures.

Cai made headlines in 2006 by paying US \$15 million for a statue of a Ming-Dynasty Buddha. His background apparently allowed him to pass the strict screening process used by auction houses, which requires bidders to submit credit information before being allowed to participate in the bidding.

## Hero or hooligan

Three days after claiming to be the mystery buyer of two controversial bronze relics, Cai found himself under the spotlight, the subject of both admiration and condemnation from his countrymen and his fellow art collectors.

Cai called a press conference in Beijing Monday and said he had made a "protest bid" at last week's Paris auction for the two bronze sculptures – the heads of a rat and a rabbit stolen by foreign allied forces from the Old Summer Palace in 1860. Cai then said he would not hand over the US \$19 million (130 million yuan) he had offered for each piece.

He said his decision to bid for the bronzes had been a patriotic act. "What I want to stress is that this money will not be paid," Cai said at the media conference.

"I believe that any Chinese person would make a similar stand. I am making an effort to fulfill my responsibilities," he said.

Cai had not yet paid up as of Wednesday, the end of the auction's payment period.

In a separate statement, Cai said he did not pay up because of the strict controls China imposed on Christie's in retaliation for the

sale, which meant the artifacts may not make it through Chinese Customs. "If those two items I bid for cannot be imported, I, naturally, will not pay for them," he said.

China Daily lauded Cai's attempt to thwart the sale. "A collector and a patriot," the English-language newspaper hailed him on its front page.

Internet sites were also abuzz with talk of Cai. One portal, Sina.com, asked if he was a patriot or the perpetrator of a farce. About 63 percent of respondents expressed support for Cai's actions.

"Everyone should respect what Cai did for the Chinese people," wrote one blogger. "In effect, he sabotaged the auction that even the government and Chinese lawyers failed to halt with official protests and an eleventh-hour legal challenge."

But there were those who criticized Cai. One netizen on 163.com described Cai's bid as meaningless. "What's the point of doing this? Christie's can just auction them off again," he said.

## Shadow over future market

Following extensive media coverage of Cai's deception, experts said his actions would

harm not only himself – he could be banned from taking part in future international auctions – but would also pose a threat within the art market with his unprecedented bid-as-a-political-protest move.

"It would be virtually impossible to put them up for auction again. Who's going to bid on them?" Zhang Yu, an art dealer in Beijing, said, "It would be like walking into a hornet's nest."

Zhang said the ruse shocked the international art market and raised disturbing questions about future auctions of Chinese relics.

"It creates a precedent about auctioning sensitive pieces and raises questions," he said. "People are now going to be much more sensitive about the issue of provenance."

Zhang said it might be more difficult to sell high-value Chinese art works in the future.

Cai could not be reached for comment, but in an interview with the *Legal Evening News*, he said he felt wronged by online speculation that it was all a publicity stunt.

"I've been doing this for many years, and it's very clear to me that my actions will have an impact on my reputation. It'll definitely take a beating," he was quoted by the paper as saying.

## Update

### Bronzes likely to remain in France

The bronze heads will likely return to the Paris home of their owner, the late fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent.

"I will be thrilled to keep them," Saint Laurent's partner, Pierre Berge, was quoted as saying in the French newspaper *Le Figaro*. "These heads were with me and they will return, and we will continue to live together

next to my Picasso."

Christie's auction house has not disclosed what action it will take against Cai.

### Lawyers abroad form alliance

Lawyers of Chinese origin around the globe have formed an alliance to help recover the country's lost cultural relics while following the development of the controversial art auction in Paris, Xinhua reported Wednesday.

"Ten lawyers, working in five countries, have joined in an alliance," Liu Yang, spokesman and one of the group's founders, told Xinhua. "They will work for future cases like the two bronze sculptures in Paris."

Liu refused to identify where they were practicing, but said the alliance planned to have a coordinator in "every foreign country where a large number of looted are held."

## Comment

### A history lesson for all

The controversy over the bronzes is a history lesson for all. I hope there will come a day when France, liberated and cleaned up, will send back this booty to a plundered China.

– Zhao Qizheng,

spokesman for the CPPCC

### Should not be linked to politics

Auctions are a commercial arena. The commercial should always be commercial. Historical grudges should remain historical. There is no need to link the two with politics.

– Erwin, local resident

### To raise awareness

I'm very glad Cai did what he did. Even though he may not bring the bronzes back to China, he has raised awareness of the importance Chinese citizens place on their history. I hope this will set into motion French writer Victor

Hugo's wish of returning all "booty to a plundered China."

– Shawn Han, Shanghai

### Much more civilized

He is so much more civilized than those who did the looting.

– Roberto, editor

CONVERSIONS APPROXIMATE		
LOT	EUR	14,000,000
678	USD	17,948,000
	GBP	12,348,000
	CHF	20,748,000
	RUB	644,434,000
	HKD	137,592,000

CHRISTIE'S  
en association avec

PIERRE  
BERGE  
& ASSOCIÉS



LOT 678

CHRISTIE'S

Cai Mingchao's actions, sabotaging last week's Christie's auction, have divided his fellow citizens.  
IC Photo





# Norwegians behind Beijing's popular social networking site

By Wang Yu

Social networking site WeLiveInBeijing.com held its first "member meet-and-greet party" at Obiwan club February 20. The gathering drew over 700 attendees.

"Many of them brought friends too. Over 600 people said on the Web site that they were attending, so we kind of expected it," said Ole Marius Loset, co-founder of the site that has become one of Beijing's hottest online communities.

## Business born on campus

Another Norwegian, co-founder and CEO Joakim Lund Rangel, fills out the site's two-man team. Loset, who is also the creative director, has collaborated with several Norwegian design firms, while Rangel has worked on various gaming and social networking projects. Among them is NorwayMafia, which in 2003 was named Norway's Best Internet Browser Game, and later, Most Addictive Game Strategy.

Like other IT company operators, Loset and Rangel started by creating a Norwegian online community called Bloc while still in college in 2004. "During the first years, it was more like a hobby since we didn't really think of making a profit. It was more for learning," Loset said. "When I look back on it now, we didn't have a clue what we were doing."

After a couple of years, their site's membership and traffic grew so much that their home-made software could no longer handle it. In 2006, they turned to Chinese specialists for a new platform. "We chose Chinese developers instead of Norwegian ones because at that time, it was very hard to find good developers in our country," Loset said.

## Move to Beijing

Their growing links to China led Loset and Rangel to pack their bags and head to Beijing in March 2008. The first beta version of WeLiveInBeijing.com was launched in the summer of 2008, but the site did not start growing significantly until 2009. "We've reached a point where we're spreading by word of mouth," Loset said.

They are also working with local nightlife venues, which according to Loset, is part of the reason why the site is growing so fast - from 13,000 to 40,000 members in the past month alone.

Foreign-owned social networking sites like Facebook and Myspace cannot compare with the success of China's "home-made" online communities such as Xiaonei and Douban, Loset said. He did a lot of research on various sites, in his search for a model, before starting WeLiveInBeijing.com.

"We're operating on a local level, which

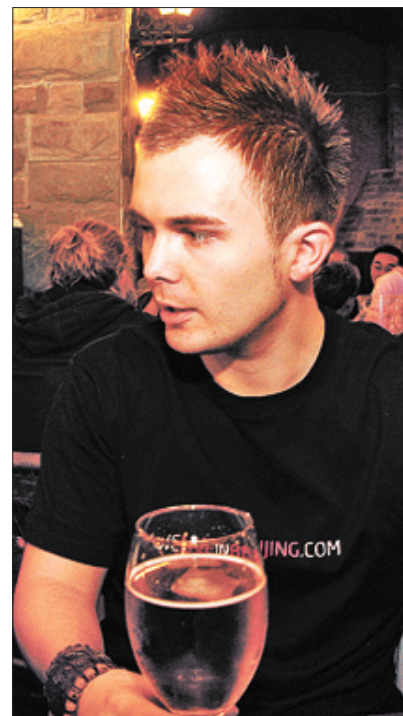
makes the web site different from other online communities. It's open and you don't need to ask for permission to view someone's profile. It's a lot easier to find new friends, instead of only keeping in contact with people you already know, like on Facebook," Loset said. "The only problem is the Chinese Internet, as some of our servers are outside the country and we have to work hard on getting the site running as fast as possible."

## Only the beginning

When Loset and Rangel put up WeLiveInBeijing.com, the idea was to reach out to the city's expats. But the site generated an enthusiastic response among Chinese people, which made the team realize they needed to focus on locals as well.

"Beijing is only the start. We're expanding to major Chinese cities such as Shanghai, Hong Kong and Dalian. We've built a platform that makes it possible to bring the model to any other city," Loset said.

The site's software is also available to third parties; in fact, Loset wants to become a provider to other people who want to build similar sites. "We will have rights to the users, but the partner will control the ads and revenue. So we don't have to be afraid of similar sites who adopt our software becoming competitors," Loset said.



Ole Marius Loset

Photo provided by Ole Marius Loset

# Chinese emperor honored by Korean descendants



South Koreans honor a Chinese emperor ancestor at a ceremony in Chongqing Monday.

CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

More than 50 South Koreans dressed in traditional Korean costume kowtowed before a portrait of a Chinese emperor, said to be their ancestor, in Chongqing on Monday.

The South Koreans share a surname with Emperor Ming Yuzhen, the first ruler of the Kingdom of Daxia that briefly ruled southwestern China 650 years ago. The Koreans have performed the ceremony annually for the last 11 years.

In the 14th century, in the twilight years of the Mongol-ruled Yuan Dynasty, rebellions emerged throughout China, including

one led by General Ming Yuzhen. In 1363, Ming established the Kingdom of Daxia in Chongqing, but he died three years later and was succeeded by his son Ming Shen.

After only seven years in power, Ming's kingdom was unseated by the forces of Zhu Yuanzhang, who established the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

Ming Yuzhen had two empresses, one of which was surnamed Peng and who, together with her son Ming Shen, was exiled to the Korean Peninsula when Zhu came to rule. Their descendants keep the family name Ming up to this day.

The Mings in Korea are on their 25th generation, with more than 40,000 descendants in the south and 20,000 in the north, according to the "Ming Family Club" from South Korea.

In 2001, the family club designated the second day of the second month on the lunar calendar to pay homage to their ancestor in Chongqing.

Another tale says Ming Shen had a younger brother, Chong, with the other empress surnamed Lin, who with his mother fled to Gansu Province. They apparently changed their surname to Gan, which

is now claimed by descendants throughout China, notably in the provinces of Sichuan, Chongqing, Guizhou, Hunan and Hubei. Some of them take part in Ming's commemoration.

Asked whether Ming Yuzhen's Gan descendants will formally join the annual ceremony in Chongqing, Gan Xuqing, one of the clan members, said the family is still looking for more documents to verify the identity of some people.

"We will hold the (worship) ceremony together sooner or later," Gan Xuqing said, "as we share the same ancestor."



# French culture week around the corner

By Han Manman

Francophone Week, the annual celebration that brings the best of French culture to China, will kick off next Saturday.

Organized by 16 embassies in China, this year's festival encompasses more than 50 events, including concerts, exhibitions and lectures, of which 27 will be held in Beijing.

One of the week's highlights are some French hip-hop artists, who will show power and vitality of the French version of a dance that in China has gone from being an underground movement to a way of life with a huge following.

The French-language center

Alliance Francaise, in partnership with the embassies of Belgium, Canada and Switzerland, is sponsoring a hip-hop concert in Beijing's Yugongyishan club on March 21. The show will feature Accrophone, Deklin, Fisto and James Deano, who will then set off on a national tour.

Another festival highlight is the Urban Treasure Hunt, which will draw clues from 10 words and take participants on a route across the city, organized by the embassies of French-speaking countries in Beijing.

For the hunt, 200 to 280 people will be divided into 40 teams to complete in 10 challenges spread throughout Cha-

oyang and Dongcheng districts. Participants will need to overcome culinary, artistic and scientific challenges, and solve puzzles to win prizes.

"It'll be a fun way to rediscover Beijing and the French language and culture," Francois Legue, press counsellor at the French Embassy, said.

The festival also features Island Literature, an event which will bring to town authors Lyonel Trouillot from Haiti and Raharimanana from Malagasy. Legue said the French empire gave rise to rich and unique languages that are a mix of French and the language of its colonies, and which now form part of the

identity of "island writers."

"Francophone Week is also a good way to evoke the Chinese people's interest in the French language and culture," Legue said.

He said that in China, there are currently between 50,000 and 70,000 learners of French, a figure which continues to rise, and which includes primary and secondary school students who are learning French as a second language.

The complete schedule for Francophone Week, which begins March 14 and ends March 22, can be found on the Web site [ccfpekin.org](http://ccfpekin.org). Most of the events are free.

## Romanian embassy celebrates Martisor festival



The Romanian ambassadress ties a Martisor around a guest's wrist.

Photo by Xing Zhipeng

By Zheng Lu

Chinese and foreign women, including ambassadresses, were invited to the Romanian Embassy last Friday to celebrate Martisor, a Romanian festival that honors women.

The festival, held on March 1, marks the coming of spring. According to the country's thousand-year-old tradition, men on that day send a small ornament called a Martisor to their mothers, sisters, daughters and female friends. It is a cord, woven from red and white threads and tasseled at each end. The colors represent happiness and power.

Women attach it to their dress front or tie it around their wrists, then tie it to a tree once spring arrives.

After being presented with Martisors, the embassy guests watched a musical performance, which showcased Mugur Ciubancan, a popular Romanian singer who impressed the audience by belting out Chinese songs and who gave the ladies roses.

For the occasion, five Chinese artists also held a painting exhibit in the embassy upon the invitation of the Romanian ambassador Viorel Isticioaia.

## India wants Chinese tourists

The Indian Tourism Agency on Tuesday started a nine-month campaign in China. The agency posted advertisements on local buses to attract Chinese visitors to the South Asian nation.

CFP Photo



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# Poet opens door to China

By Zhang Dongya

"I am waiting outside the door of China for long," Olav H Hauge, a Norwegian poet, said in one of his pieces, "Before the Door of China." Hauge, who was strongly influenced by Chinese ancient poetry, finally entered the door with the posthumous publication of his poetry collection in Chinese.

The book of poems, titled *I Stand, I Can Stand it*, was translated by Norwegian professor Harald Bockman and Chinese contemporary poet Xichuan, and published last month by Writers Publishing House.

Critics, translators, poets, including prominent contemporary Chinese poet Ouyang Jianghe, and Norway's ambassador to China, Svein Saether, attended the book launch at the Mawood Theater in Beijing last Saturday.

Hauge (1908-1994) was born in the western town of Ulvik, and lived there nearly all his life as a gardener in his own orchard. His poetry is considered one of the major achievements of 20th-century Norwegian literature.

His poems are characteristically short and have a medita-

tive approach to universal themes. "Hauge's poems are simple, generous, swift and direct to the core of the subject. Their style has that magical response to ancient Chinese poetry," Writers Publishing House said.

Since Hauge's poems were first published in 1946, they have been translated into various languages and have influenced present-day poets. In addition to a body of hundreds of poems, Hauge left behind volumes of diaries, which have also been published.

The poet was captivated by Chinese philosophy as a young man. In 1931, at age 21, he copied three paragraphs of the classic Taoist scripture *Tao Te Ching* on his notebook. Among poems published in 1961, two were about Chinese poets Qu Yuan and Li Bai.

In one of Hauge's poems called "Reading Lu Ji," which only has four lines, he wrote about Lu Ji, a Xijin Dynasty (265-316) poet, and Edvard Munch, a Norwegian symbolist and expressionist painter. "It is a success to make a connection between two people from different countries with dissimilar backgrounds," Ouyang said.



The book's translator Xichuan (right) reads Hauge's poems at the book release. Photo by Goril Borgen

Hauge drew much inspiration from classical Chinese poetry. In a poem regarding the moon, he said he saw a new moon that was an old moon as well, which reminded Chinese poets of Li Bai's "Ask a Moon Holding the Wine."

"In China, after many artists have described and painted the moon, the moon is no longer a plain image, but carries much meaning like feelings of homesickness," Ouyang said.

The translator and poet Xichuan's work garnered praise within poetry circles. Xichuan said his work on Hauge's poems made

him feel very close to the Norwegian poet.

Ouyang said the translation was not simply a work of communication between cultures. "Hauge and Xichuan have the similarity of being from the 'north,' so there was a special connection ... Hauge's life gained new a new dimension through Xichuan's translation."

During the book launch, Norwegian artists Juni Dahr, Tore Brunborg and Thomas Strønen performed "Hello Hauge," which is based on the poet's work and which was commissioned for a poetry festival in Norway last year.

## \$10,000 on offer for vegetarian foie gras recipe

By Annie Wei

Many traditional French dishes include ingredients obtained from animals. However, as our world gets increasingly more health-conscious and aware of animal rights, alternative cooking ingredients are needed.

Last week, the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), an international animal rights organization, kicked off its Fine Faux Foie Gras Challenge, a search for a chef who can create the best recipe for vegetarian foie gras. The winner will be awarded US \$10,000 (68,442 yuan).

Foie gras, derived from a French word for "fatty liver," is made from the fattened liver of an animal, especially duck and geese.

PETA said fine-dining patrons around the world are choosing to skip foie gras because of the issue of cruelty to animals. The organization said foie gras is produced by force-feeding ducks and geese until they fall ill with hepatic steatosis, which causes the liver to become painfully engorged. Investigations at foie gras farms have documented animals that were often sick, dying or dead, PETA said.

But just because gourmets choose to forgo this "delicacy of despair" does not mean they want to miss out on traditional French food, the group said. "The goal of the challenge is to give fine diners a compassionate alternative to eating the diseased liver of a tormented bird," Su Zhongxi of PETA Asia-Pacific said. "It's also an opportunity for a chef to create a culinary first that is delicious and won't ruffle any feathers."

Su said the challenge is targeted toward chefs in Beijing and Shanghai, and that PETA's strategy is to communicate with restaurants known for French cuisine or foie gras.

According to the contest's rules, the winning chef must produce an original, purely vegetarian foie gras comparable in taste and texture to the glob of prized bird fat. The first and second runners-up will each receive US \$1,000 worth of top-drawer kitchen equipment.

The winner, who has the honor of naming his or her creation, must also agree to offer the dish on the menu of a fine-dining restaurant, and allow PETA to distribute the recipe to chefs and media around the world.

Only recipes should be submitted; prepared dishes will not be accepted. For more information, check out the peta.org Web site.

## Dress up for school



By Chiao Yu Tuan

Woo Yong Choi, a grade 10 Korean student from Beijing City International School (BCIS) organized a personal project – the first School Spirit Week. Each day of the week has a theme for students and faculty to dress up: house color and wacky hair day, pajama day, character day, clash day and twin day.

Photo provided by BCIS

## 'Ghetto theaters' are back

By He Jianwei

More than 70 independent international films, encompassing comedies and horror movies, are being screened at bars, clubs and restaurants around town until March 21.

The Third New Beijing International Movie Week presents films by indie Chinese and foreign directors never before shown in Beijing.

Peter Sallade, one of the organizers, said the Movie Week is "a showcase for culturally aware, socially acceptable movies that audiences in Beijing would not have the opportunity

to see otherwise."

The plan was hatched in 2007 in the desire to push intercultural exchange to the forefront. "With independent film screenings in Beijing occurring increasingly frequently, some of our Chinese and foreign members one day realized there wasn't any event that brought us together under one banner to promote the cross-cultural communication these films catalyzed," Sallade said.

In China, independent films used to be screened at small back-alley viewing rooms or makeshift art galleries. But these places are

slowly disappearing with the passage of time, thus the organizers turned to the city's dining and nightlife establishments.

The organizers hope the screenings will raise awareness among expats of Chinese independent films, and at the same time, encourage Chinese audiences to attend international movie screenings.

"Frequently, only Chinese people show up at Chinese independent film screenings, despite the movies being targeted at an international audience. Also, foreign independent film screenings sometimes ignore the vast local

populace and get hidden in overpriced venues, advertised only in English," he said.

During the first Movie Week, 40 movies including full-length features, shorts and documentaries were shown. That and the following year, organizers encountered problems because movie-goers asked why there were not more Chinese films in the lineup.

The group has learned from the experience. "We host at least one public event each month where people come together to watch Chinese independent movies," Sallade said.



# Schools for pet training

By Jin Zhu

Nobody can remember exactly when the pet craze started in China. But as more and more animals become part the family, there is an increasing demand for pet trainers, especially in large cities.

## Basic training at Xueda Manor

Running in circles, rolling on the ground and playing dead are just some of the tricks taught at basic pet training schools like Xueda Manor in Haidian District.

Shi Bin, an instructor at the school, says dog owners should wait until their pets are at least six months old before bringing them to school.

"Puppies grow and develop rapidly, and those younger than six months usually eat more and burn more energy. They cannot be controlled during training as long as adult dogs," said Shi, who has been training pets for four years.

On a Saturday morning, Shi met a new student, a puppy named Feifei. Her lessons during the 30-day training will include learning how to walk alongside her owner, to respond to calls, to sit down and to shake hands.

Shi said one of the most important aspects of dog training is the reward and praise given the animal each time it obeys.

Another important series of lessons is to help Feifei develop good habits. Pet paraphernalia such as a dog bed, food and water bowls, a leash and collar, and toys are prepared in advance. The dog will be taught to avoid ugly habits like eating just about anywhere, using her mouth or teeth to play with people and getting too excited.

"The problems associated with keeping pets are on the rise. Therefore, sending my puppy to training school is responsible," Feifei's owner Zhang Hanqiu said.

Shi said owners need to follow guidelines too. "School rules are easily broken when the puppy gets home. So owners should learn to treat their pets according to certain rules no matter how cute they are," he said. This was exactly one of the reasons



An instructor from Xueda Manor is coaching dogs.

Photo provided by Xueda Manor

that Zhang went with her pet to school.

Where: Opposite Cuihu Villa, Shangzhuang Village, Haidian District

Tel: 6247 8898

Web site: x-dog.net

Cost: 2,000 yuan for 30 days

## Training for professional competitions

The training courses at Beijing BoBo Pets School are different from your regular pet schools in town.

Jason He, an instructor, said that besides giving pets basic training, the school prepares certain breeds for professional com-

petitions like catching a Frisbee or hunting for an object.

He said pets that train for competitions need to be at least 4 months old and pass a qualification test. "The object for the pet to fetch can be changed depending on various factors. The Rough Collie, for example, is naturally active and lively and is well suited to catching a Frisbee."

The school also provides pet salon services and health-care for animals undergoing training.

Where: Beiwu Village, Shunyi District

Tel: 8050 8687

Web site: bobopet.com

Cost: 12,800 yuan for 8 months

## Other pet training schools

Tiaoliang pet training school

Where: 91 Shunbai Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 8459 2208

Web site: zoolook.com.cn

Cost: 2,400 yuan for 30 days (membership required)

Jiajun pet training center

Where: Liujadian, Pinggu District

Tel: 6197 3366

Web site: xldog.com

Cost: 4,500 yuan for 30 days

# New base for copyright transactions

By Zhao Hongyi

To better protect intellectual property rights (IPR) and accelerate related transactions, the National Copyright Administration (NCA) opened the third international copyrights trading base in the city last month.

NCA, together with the Dongcheng District government, set up the new Yonghe base at the Zhongguancun Science Park to provide 24-hour year-round service to both domestic and foreign individuals and companies.

"This base has the full support of the central government and will provide professional, systematic and dependable service to ensure the rapid growth of copyright transactions in the years to come," Liu Bingjie, the administrator of NCA, said during the inauguration ceremony.

"We will invite all copyright owners and other entrepreneurs to display their products, conduct transactions and find investment opportunities here," Yan Xiaohong, deputy administrator of NCA told reporters.

Prior to the Yonghe base, Beijing already set up two transaction centers, which have also served as trading bases. One is in Jingguang Center on the Third Ring Road and the other in Renmin University's Culture and Science Park.

IPR products that are processed at the bases include books, photographs, audio and video products, as well as software products. So far, the Jingguang base has introduced more than 100 books published domestically and another 100 cartoons, movies and TV series that have been broadcast.

## Yonghe base

Where: 11/F Gehua Tower, 1 Qinglong Hutong, Dongcheng District

Tel: 8418 7026

Fax: 8418 7027

Web site: zgc.gov.cn

## Jingguang base

Where: 2/F Business Tower, Jingguang Center, Dong Sanhuan, Dongcheng District

Tel: 6597 4890

Fax: 6597 8017

Web site: icocen.com

## Renda base

Where: Culture Tower, Renmin University of China, 59 Zhongguancun Street, Haidian District

Tel: 8250 9959

Web site: ruc.edu.cn

# 'Green channel' speeds up emergency visa for foreign enterprises

By Zheng Lu

To offer convenience to foreign companies, a "green" visa channel was set up this week at the Beijing Capital Airport by the municipality's Public Security Bureau (PSB).

Last year, the PSB's Administration Division of Exit and Entry processed a thousand "emergency" visas for people connected with the top 500 foreign corporations operating in China.

Such visa applications take time to process,

and need to go through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Commerce.

After consulting with firms from South Korea, Germany, Japan and France, the administration signed an agreement with them for a green visa channel, which allows these companies to send representatives to apply emergency visas for their visitors.

Zhang Suixin, executive vice president of Volkswagen in China, said that they needed to bring in more foreign consul-

ants. Zhang told the administration that most of their visitors first needed to go through other Chinese airports via Beijing. "The green channel will offers us convenience and fast service," he said.

The administration said it plans to expand the service to more foreign corporations. The port visa sections are located on the third floor of Terminal 2 and at the E11 exit in Terminal 3. Call 6459 0454 for Terminal 2 and 6453 2939 for Terminal 3 for questions.

## ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: [weiyang@ynet.com](mailto:weiyang@ynet.com)

**How does the city's bike rental system operate? Are they the bikes on street corners, including those by newspaper kiosks?**

To promote convenient transportation, more and more places are providing bike rental services. There are two bike rental companies in the city. One charges a 180-yuan deposit and 2 yuan per hour of use; another asks for 400 yuan as deposit and a 100-yuan service fee. The latter charges 20 yuan per day and 10 yuan for half a day, or four hours, of use. If you are interested in renting a bike from them, you can approach whoever is in the nearest newspaper kiosks.

**Can I get an International Driver's License in Beijing? Also, if I have it, am I permitted to drive here?**

You can only get an International Driver's License (IDL) if you already have a valid driver's license from one of the countries that are party to the IDL program. China, unfortunately, is not. You would also need to get an IDL issued in the country in which you got your driver's license. But an IDL is not accepted in China; you will need to get a Chinese driver's license.

If you already have a driver's license from another country, you just need to take a multiple-choice exam to get a Chinese license.

(By Wei Ying)



# Fiery pa for the cla

Zubin Mehta and the Vic

## Program

### March 8

Arnold Schoenberg, Transfigured  
Night, Op. 4  
Richard Strauss, A Hero's Life, Op. 40

### March 9

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Overture  
to "The Marriage of Figaro"  
Joseph Haydn, Symphony No 104 in D  
Major, "London"  
Frederic Chopin, Piano Concerto No. 2  
in F Minor, Op. 21 with pianist Lang Lang  
Franz Schubert, Symphony No 9 in C  
Major, "The Great," D 944

## The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra Concert

Where: Concert Hall, National Center for the Per-  
forming Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District  
When: 7:30 pm, March 8 and 9  
Admission: 1,580 yuan for VIP; 1,280, 880, 580,  
280 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

Photos provided by National Center for Performing Arts



# mission ssics

## Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

### Orchestra's fourth visit

*Gramophone Magazine*, a classical music magazine circulated in London, released its annual ranking of the world's top 20 orchestras at the end of 2008. The VPO was in its top three.

The VPO is one of the first foreign orchestras that performed in New China with its 1973 performance under the baton of Italian conductor Claudio Abbado. Mehta came with the VPO on its second visit in 1996. Its third visit was in 2004 with Seiji Ozawa as conductor.

1973 was an important year for classical music fans. That year, China welcomed three top orchestras: the London Philhamonic Orchestra, the VPO and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Their visits began a classical music wave and played an important role in cultural communication.

China Central Television has broadcast the VPO's New Year Concert every year since 1987. The orchestra has many fans in China. Its New Year's concert included pieces from the Strauss family, with additional pieces from other Austrian compos-

ers. For its fourth visit, the orchestra plans to shatter this Chinese stereotype.

It will perform pieces from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Franz Schubert, Richard Strauss and Arnold Schoenberg, spanning 300 years from the classical to the modern period. This year is the 200th anniversary of the death of Joseph Haydn, "the Father of the Symphony" Haydn. The orchestra will perform Haydn's Symphony No 104 "London," as homage to the composer.

### Mission of a musician

Born in Mumbai, India in 1936, Mehta began his career in Vienna, where he made his debut as a conductor at age 22. The same year, he won the Liverpool International Conducting Competition. He was the youngest conductor in the VPO's history.

By 1961, he had conducted the Vienna, Berlin and Israel Philharmonic orchestras, and retains close ties with these orchestras.

He became music adviser to the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra (IPO) in 1969 after entering as a substitute eight years prior, and was made director of the orchestra in 1977. By 1981, Mehta was named music director for life.

"Through these years, my love and admiration for, and solidarity with, the people of Israel has only grown stronger ... Israel has given me back tenfold what little I have offered of myself," he said.

For a long time, some countries were unwilling to accept the IPO's performance for political reasons. But as a music director, Mehta said he hopes he and his orchestra would enable people of many different countries to see and hear the artistic side of Israel.

During his tenure, he has led 1,600 concerts, a few of which were unforgettable, such as the Victory Concert in Jerusalem following the Six-Day War of 1967.

"In 1981, we held a concert on the northern border for the Lebanese. They danced with our musicians afterward, hugging them, saying Arabs and Jews are brothers," he said.

By He Jianwei

"Whichever orchestra I work with, I will surely hold my baton on this stage in the future," conductor Zubin Mehta said when he visited the National Center for the Performing Arts (NCPA) at the end of 2007. At that time, he and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra were touring China.

This month, Mehta will keep his vow when he leads the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (VPO) in two concerts at the NCPA.

### Conservative and open-minded

Mehta is the first Asian conductor to take the baton of a Vienna New Year's Concert. He has conducted it four times, in 1990, 1995, 1998 and 2007.

Compared with other leading orchestras, the VPO focuses on more 18th and 19th century classics.

Although the orchestra is acknowledged as one of the world's finest, it was criticized by feminist groups in the 1990s, because it did not allow women to become full members until 1997.

The 167-year-old orchestra stood by the 19th century tradition of being an all-male ensemble. In 1997, the first woman, harpist Anna Lelkes, became a member after performing with the orchestra as a "non-member" for over 20 years.

In addition, no woman conducted the orchestra before Australian conductor Simone Young in January 2005.

There will be three women members at the China concerts. It is the first time the orchestra will perform with women here.

Although it seems a little conservative on the issue of women musicians, it is more open-minded toward its conductors.

The orchestra has been led by almost every big name conductor, such as Gustav Mahler, Leonard Bernstein, Simon Rattle, Herbert von Karajan, Riccardo Muti and Mariss Jansons. A conductor cannot be a maestro until he or she has held the baton of the VPO.

### Close ties with Chinese artists

Both Mehta and the VPO have strong relations with China. They have cooperated with Chinese artists many times over the past decades.

Mehta's first visit to China was in 1994, when he brought the IPO to Shanghai. After the Shanghai performance, he said China had the best audience but the worst theater.

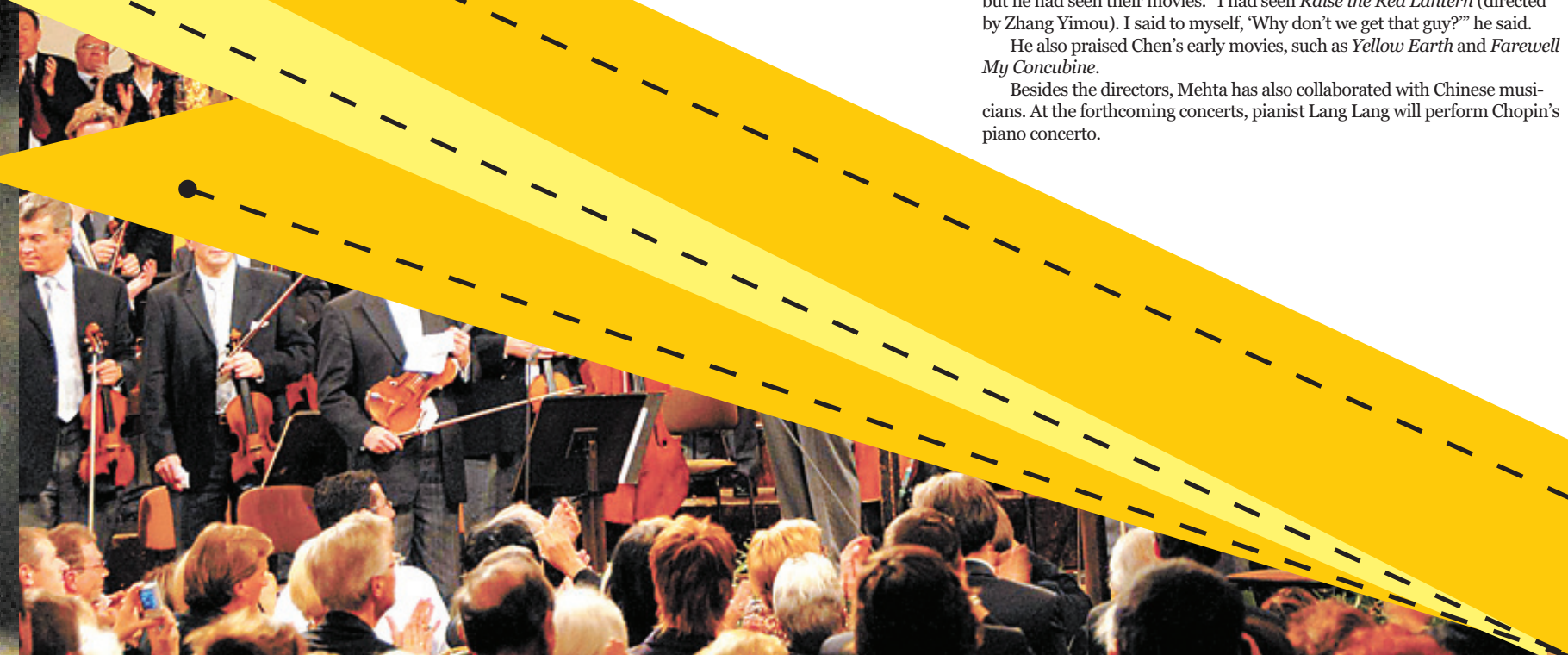
One of his other "unforgettable concerts" was his collaboration with director Zhang Yimou in 1998 to produce the opera *Turandot* by Giacomo Puccini. Mehta was excited to stage an opera before the Forbidden City's Wumen Gate.

Last year, he collaborated with director Chen Kaige, again on *Turandot*, but this time in Florence, Italy.

Before their collaboration, Mehta did not know the directors' names, but he had seen their movies. "I had seen *Raise the Red Lantern* (directed by Zhang Yimou). I said to myself, 'Why don't we get that guy?'" he said.

He also praised Chen's early movies, such as *Yellow Earth* and *Farewell My Concubine*.

Besides the directors, Mehta has also collaborated with Chinese musicians. At the forthcoming concerts, pianist Lang Lang will perform Chopin's piano concerto.





# Rediscover the social scenes of Old Shanghai

By Zhang Dongya

An active social scene is part of a city's culture, and an important symbol of its prosperity.

When historian Nenad Djordjevic went to Shanghai for research, he was captivated by the names of its clubs and associations strewn about old newspapers and documents. He then began to explore the nature of expat and Chinese clubs in the city, and compiled his findings in *Old Shanghai Clubs and Associations* (340pp, Earnshaw Books, 400 yuan), published last month.

"I tried to preserve some of [Shanghai's] forgotten personalities and their deeds, which created this city from oblivion," the author said in the foreword.

Djordjevic, born in Belgrade in 1970, worked as a historian at the Yugoslavian archives. From 2002 to 2006, he worked as a diplomat in Beijing, after which he was appointed Consul-General of Shanghai's Serbian consulate.

In the book, the author iden-

tified 2,000 foreign and Chinese clubs, societies and associations, along with thousands of Old Shanghai personalities from the 1840s, when it was established as a foreign port, till the present.

His directory is considered a landmark work of scholarship, which provides a unique resource for the study of Old Shanghai and an invaluable insight into a vitally important and much-neglected part of modern history.

The book, packed with information and rare details about the lives of foreigners in Old Shanghai, includes a CD-ROM so readers can do keyword searches of the text. "It is a great tool, not only for historical researchers, but also for people searching for information on their great grandparents," the publisher Graham Earnshaw told *Beijing Today*.

To the casual reader, the author paints an extraordinary portrait of Old Shanghai's social life with clubs catering to all sorts of foreign nationals. Read-

ers can see how war and political factors influenced social life. The American community, for example, became isolated during World War I since the British suspected them for not getting involved; and women were employed so male club workers could join the army.

In the A-Z list of Old Shanghai clubs, the author offers extraordinary details on some big and successful clubs, including the American Club founded in 1916, which grew from 178 members in 1917 to 1,030 in 1929. The club's first house rule was issued in 1917 to prevent women from entering the club, except on special occasions and only then when approved by the committee.

Through the foreign communities and their ever-changing relationships, Djordjevic sees another side the international city - it is, or was, "a place where nationalities rarely mixed socially without sharing a similar background."

## OLD SHANGHAI CLUBS & ASSOCIATIONS

A DIRECTORY OF THE RICH LIFE  
OF FOREIGNERS IN SHANGHAI  
FROM THE 1840S TO THE 1950S



By Nenad Djordjevic

CD-ROM  
inside for  
full keyword  
search

## Chinese filmmakers' road to international world

By He Jianwei

Many Chinese filmmakers have made it onto the red carpet at international film festivals, and their movies have been accepted by both international studios and Western viewers.

But Chinese filmmakers walked a long road to get to the international film world, due in part to the domestic industry, which is fragmented between the cultures and tastes of the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Michael Berry, an assistant professor of contemporary cultural studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara, observed the Chinese film industry for eight years. He has interviewed 20 Chinese filmmakers since 2001 and published his interviews in *Speaking in Images: Interviews*



with *Contemporary Chinese Filmmakers* (491pp, Guangxi Normal University Press, 39 yuan) last August.

Berry's questions are as intelligent as the interviewees' answers are detailed. It is useful for anyone who wants to understand

the complexities and power of contemporary Chinese films.

It is not only an oral history book about Chinese film, but also an archive of contemporary intellectuals. In their spiritual world, the filmmakers of the three regions have been marked by different cultural experiences.

The first part about the Chinese mainland filmmakers is high point of the book.

On the mainland, film is less developed than in the other two regions. Berry interviewed three generations of filmmakers that rose to prominence since 1949. Xie Jin, born in 1923, was part of the first generation of directors after the founding of the People's Republic of China.

"The difference between our generation and the younger directors is that they didn't experience dramatic history.

But we lived through the nation's fall (during the World War II), so we are patriotic," Xie said in his final interview before he died last October.

Zhang Yimou, Chen Kaige and Tian Zhuangzhuang are members of the "Fifth Generation," who graduated from the Beijing Film Academy in 1982 and popularized Chinese film abroad. These filmmakers' works range from black comedy to the esoteric, but they share a common rejection of the socialist-realist tradition employed by earlier Chinese filmmakers.

And Zhang Yuan, Wang Xiaoshuai, Jia Zhangke and Li Yang are regarded as the "Sixth Generation," who brought a more individualistic, anti-romantic life-view with a focus on contemporary urban life.

The key word for Taiwan's

filmmakers is 'identification'. Ang Lee, an Academy Award winner, said his generation focuses on the problem of identification. His early films discussed the cultural shock between two generations, recurring themes of alienation, marginalization and repression.

In Hong Kong, multiculturalism influenced filmmakers. Ann Hui, Stanley Kwan and Peter Chan Ho-Sun observed people's fates in the former British colony. Their topics ranged from disorientation to despair, gender roles and sexuality.

Berry captures the interviewees' unique visions and discusses their formative years, the ideas that influenced and shaped their work and aesthetics, their battles with censors and studios, the mingling of commercial and art film and the future of Chinese cinema.

## Bookworm book listing

Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following best sellers to *Beijing Today* readers.

### My Name Is Red

By Orhan Pamuk,  
432pp, Vintage, US \$14.95

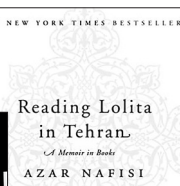
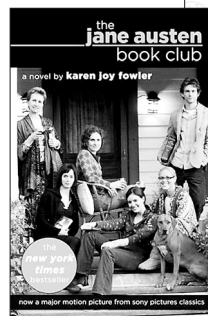
The Sultan has commissioned a cadre of the most acclaimed artists in the land to create a great book celebrating the glories of his realm. Their task: to illuminate the work in European style. But because figurative art can be deemed an affront to Islam, this commission is a dangerous proposition indeed. The ruling

elite therefore must not know the scope or nature of the project, and panic erupts when one of the chosen miniaturists disappears. The only clue to the mystery - or crime - lies in the half-finished illuminations themselves. Part fantasy and part philosophical puzzle, the book is a kaleidoscopic journey to the intersection of art, religion, love, sex and power.

### The Jane Austen Book Club

By Karen Joy Fowler,  
304pp, Plume, US \$14.00

Five women and a man meet once a month



in California's Central Valley to discuss Jane Austen's novels. They are ordinary people, neither happy nor unhappy, but each is wounded in a different way: All are all mixed up about their lives and relationships. Over the six months they meet, marriages are tested, affairs begin and unsuitable arrangements become suitable under the guiding eye of Jane Austen.

### Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books

By Azar Nafisi, 400pp,  
Random House Trade  
Paperbacks, US \$16.00  
Every Thursday

morning for two years in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Azar Nafisi, a bold and inspired teacher, secretly gathered seven of her most committed female students to read forbidden Western classics. As Islamic morality squads staged arbitrary raids in Tehran, as fundamentalists seized hold of the universities and a blind censor stifled artistic expression, the women in Nafisi's living room spoke not only of the books they were reading but also about themselves, their dreams and their disappointments.

(By He Jianwei)



# Cut and create a paper fantasy

## Western origin of paper models

In the early 20th century, printed paper models were commonly included in magazine inserts. During World War II, paper was one of the few commodities not regulated by the government, and its versatility made it a popular medium for hobbyists.

Paper models were more popular in Europe and Japan than in the US, and hobbyists' interests decreased as plastic models became commonly available. But the Internet has preserved the old-style paper models in a medium which can spread them at little to no cost. The ability to download and print the models with regular inkjet printers has made it a zero-cost hobby.

Higher quality kits can be purchased from dedicated publishers. With the help of modern computer technology, a creator can draw his models with Adobe Illustrator, CAD or other 3D design software like Rhino 3D or 3DS Max, and then share his designs on the Internet. Commercial printer manufacturers like Canon and Epson also provide paper models on their Web sites as free downloads.



## Model nuts: a growing group

In China, paper models are still considered an educational toy for young children. "The prejudice is partly responsible for keeping it a niche hobby," said King Jin, one of the most experienced local hobbyists. The convenient and environmentally friendly method attracted Jin into the local scene.

Dong Bin, an IT engineer, first found professional paper models in 2003. "One of my friends came back from England and brought some kits for me. I was stunned by the perfect printing and the complexity of the designs," Dong said.

But for most Chinese builders, original kits are hard to get and expensive. Some cost as much as 1,000 yuan with accessories. "Senior hobbyists buy paper model kits from Taiwanese dealers, but for most beginners and regular fans, scanned versions from the Internet are a more affordable choice.

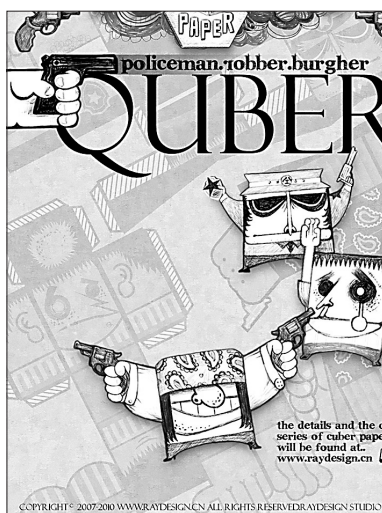
Scans, however, are still a far cry from original kits.

Another reason paper models are unpopular in China is the difficulty in producing a good model. Some imported kits from Europe contain more than 1,000 pieces. Such models are the products of modern publishing technology and are challenging for fans.

"A model of the Battleship Bismarck has 7,000 pieces, which is a tough job even for the experienced hobbyist. Some beginners start with a hard model, then leave the sheet unfinished and give up paper models for good. Few publishing companies would go into a business with so few consumers," Dong, who is also a model designer, said.

Jin founded cardmodel.cn, a portal for paper models, in May 2007. The Web site introduced many foreign fans to the Chinese paper model scene. "We do not offer downloads of pirated models, only downloads of original designs. Protecting copyrights is a way to gain respect," Jin said. He runs the Web site to guide beginners.

"To finish a paper model requires perseverance. Most of my friends who are into models approach daily tasks with the same devotion. Our education system doesn't promote creativity, but making paper models could fill in the gap if we got more people involved," Jin said.



## Graphic designers: a new carrier of art

If she had not visited a British site called Remember The Little Guy, which hosts its founder's art work and paper toys, Penny Chai, Lenovo's graphic designer, would still think her favorite hobby was dead.

"I remember paper toys during my childhood – cool, popular and cube-shaped – that's why I love my robot series," Chai said. She has released three series of her own designs under the name Quber. Unlike model fans, designers like Chai choose a cubic body so their toys would be easier to make.

"I was confused by those complex paper

models," Chai said. "The simple shape offers greater creative freedom to designers. You can use your imagination on the cubes to create different characters."

Her second popular series is a policeman, robber and civilian. Two of them hold guns, and it's easy to create scenes and stories with those characters. "I was inspired by the news, of course it wasn't good news," Chai said.

The other two series are robots in red and black. The red ones are the heroes and the black ones the villains. "It is just the beginning of a robot world, and I hope to show more life scenarios through these

cube robots," she said.

The graphic designer's works are simple but connect with modern art and cartoon figures. Lonely monsters, alien animals and Super Mario can be built using paper cubes. Paper toys have been popular in iMart since last year.

Chai, together with a designer friend, started her studio Raydesign and has cooperated with brands like Nike on visual works. Her Quber paper toys have been printed and sold without permission. So it might be time to turn it into a side business.

"I planned to do that for a long



Photos provided by Dong Bin and Penny Chai



time. But how to market the models is a problem, as is finding someone who can handle sales. But at least it's a good hobby, right?" Chai said.



# Shopping for beauty in a box



Gift bag

By Zhang Dongya

Sa Sa, the largest cosmetics store chain in Asia, opened its second "select" shop in Beijing early this year, following the one in Macao last year. The store is also the company's sixth branch in the city.

Sa Sa's products run the gamut of personal care items: skincare, fragrance, makeup, slimming, hair care, nail care, bathing, health and beauty supplements and men's products. With International Women's Day coming this weekend, Sa Sa is offering promotions to mark the special day.



The Sa Sa Select Store, located at the Beijing Yintai Center, targets elite consumers. Unlike its other stores that are swathed in pink, the select store has an understated yet elegant decor.

Following the company's successful "one-stop cosmetics specialty store" concept, the new shop offers people a wide range of products. Skincare products, makeup, fragrance, health food are all available here.

It also offers brand-name beauty products, as well as niche brands, particularly those from Europe and the US. These include Suisse Programme and Methode Swiss from Switzerland, Bergman from the Netherlands and Natio from Australia.

Suisse Programme, a recognized name in cellular therapy, works to regenerate the skin and improve its vitality. The brand's best sellers include Cellular Eye Zone Firming Essence (15 mL, 1,160 yuan), Cellular Aqua Day Cream (30 mL, 880 yuan) and Up-Lift Firming Serum (30 mL, 1,400 yuan), an oil-free concentrated serum, which combats the signs of aging.

Bergman, initially created for skin before and after plastic surgery, has developed into a unisex skincare brand.

In Asia, Sa Sa has built a reputation for its "fragrance zone." Last year, the Fragrance of the Year Awards, bestowed by the company on what it considers top fragrances, became a hit among customers and guided their shopping selection.

The select store has kept the fragrance zone and exclusively sells brand-names such as Alviero Martini, Miss Fiorucci, Marina de Bourbon, Pal Zileri, Perry Ellis and Sergio Tacchini.

Sa Sa has beauty consultants on-hand to assist shoppers. In Beijing, it has 60 consultants at its six locations. At the select store, there is a special room for skin therapy, where three beauty consultants can answer customers' questions on health and beauty. Through the company's loyalty program, return shoppers have a chance to enjoy free face-care treatments.

Customers who spend at least 2,000 yuan at once can immediately become a VIP member, which entitles them to a 5-percent discount on future purchases and "bonus points" for product redemptions. Less enthu-

siastic shoppers can also get the VIP card by making 3,000 yuan worth of purchases within six months. The card can be used on top of promotions or discounts.

To celebrate International Women's Day, Sa Sa will be having a promotion from today until Sunday. People who shop at any of its stores will get a 20-yuan voucher for every 200 yuan spent. All products are included in the promo, except for fragrances.

The company also has a shop online at sasa.com. Shoppers here can find products not offered in Sa Sa stores – generally at lower prices, but buyers do have to pay for the cost of shipping. Domestic orders can be expedited and purchases of at least US \$75 dollars (513 yuan) will be shipped free, so order together with family and friends to get a good deal.

#### Sa Sa Select store

Where: Beijing Yintai Center, 2 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 9 pm

Tel: 8517 1392

Photos provided by Sasa



Up-Lift Firming Serum, 300mL, 1,400 yuan

#### Other locations

##### Oriental Plaza Branch

Where: Oriental Plaza, 1 Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

Open: 9 am – 9:30 pm

Tel: 8518 6072

##### Yansha Branch

Where: 1007 Yansha Outlets Mall, 9 Dongsihuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 9 am – 9:30 pm

Tel: 8738 1782





# Duck extravaganza

By Venus Lee

When you hear people talking of duck dishes, Peking Duck is likely the first thing that comes to mind. First served in the Qing Dynasty, the roast duck is prized for its thin, crispy skin: the less meat attached the better. It is eaten with their home-made pancakes, spring onions and soy paste. China however has other types of duck dishes that are equally good – though they are overshadowed by Beijing's famed roast duck.



## Steamed Duck

In 1910, the Steamed Duck Cutlet, characterized by its delicate taste and tenderness, was awarded by the Qing government. It subsequently became popular in the south.

Aside from duck meat, this traditional tonic dish is prepared using dry lotus leaves, diced lean cutlets, ripe winter bamboo shoots, diced preserved ham, fried taro, diced shiitake mushrooms, tender string beans and shrimp.

First, the skinless duck is fried until the meat turns yellow. The diced meat and vegetables are then stir-fried with spices for while, and then stuffed into the bird's stomach. Next, the fowl is wrapped in lotus leaves and placed in a bamboo steamer over a fire. The leaves give the meat a wonderful aroma.

### Haideguan

Where: 3 Guanchengyuan Dong Lu, Jiandeqiao, Haidian District

Tel: 6236 3013, 62368355

Price: 23 yuan

Photo provided by Tengzixin



## Zhangcha Duck

Zhangcha Duck, or tea-smoked duck, is a quintessential Sichuan dish. Due to its complicated preparation process, it is more often eaten in banquets or during festive events than in meals prepared at home.

The fowl is first marinated for several hours in a rub containing a combination of whole or crushed Sichuan pepper, ginger, garlic, salt and *huangjiu* or *baijiu*, or fermented or distilled alcoholic beverages. Much of it is rubbed inside the bird's cavity.

Sometimes the marinade is augmented with black pepper, tea leaves, camphor leaves and *choujiu*, a fermented alcoholic beverage brewed from glutinous rice, to improve its taste. After it is marinated, the duck is quickly blanched in hot water to tighten the skin, then towel and air-dried. This step ensures that its skin acquires a crisp snap.

Next, the fowl is smoked with black tea leaves or camphor twigs and leaves for 10-15 minutes, then steamed for another 10 minutes before being deep-fried in vegetable oil until its skin becomes crisp.

This dish is available at Meizhou Dongpo, a Sichuan restaurant chain.

### Meizhou Dongpo

Where: Building 1, Tuanjiehu Dong Li, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 8598 8912

Price: 38 yuan

Photo provided by Meizhou Dongpo

## Pressed Duck



Legend goes that during the Southern Dynasties period (420-589), an emperor was besieged by enemies in the imperial city. Soldiers fought bloody battles to defend the city, while the women prepared salted duck and wrapped them in leaves to preserve their flavor. These were then packed into a large container and delivered to the soldiers. When the soldiers unwrapped the leaves, they found the meat pressed flat, thus earning it the name Pressed Duck.

The difference between Salted Duck and Pressed Duck lies in their texture. The former is fresh and tender, while the latter is tight and pliable.

### Juzizhoutou

Where: 6 Zhixin Dong Lu, Haidian District

Tel: 6231 8126, 6233 5795

Price: 42 yuan

Photo provided by Juzizhoutou



## Salted Duck

This dish goes back 400 years, and is one of China's most popular methods of preparing duck. The meat, covered by white skin, is fatty but not greasy, and has the aroma of flowers.

Nanjing's salted duck, seasoned with Osmanthus flowers, is the dish's most famous version. It is said that the best time to eat it is in August, the season of autumn in Nanjing when Osmanthus blossom and ducks have reached their optimum weight.

Salt and spices are smeared on the fowl, then it

is marinated in soy sauce for two hours and then steamed until it becomes fragrant, crisp and tender.

Yanchunlou, one of the city's most famous Huaiyang restaurants, serves traditional Nanjing salted duck.

### Yanchunlou

Where: 1/F, Jiangsu restaurant, 1 Ganxhuiqiao, Andingmen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District

Tel: 64226633-3705

Price: 38 yuan

Photo provided by Yanchunlou



# A marriage of drawing and painting

By Venus Lee

"The paintings are kind of mysterious, abstract and invite me to meditate. They might be a mirror of the painter's mental condition," Elisabeth Doudinot De La Boissiere, a viewer, commented on works by Gustavo R. Rugeles on display at a wine boutique.

Rugeles, who is holding his first solo exhibition at the place, bases his pieces largely on people's facial expressions. The Venezuelan artist incorporates disordered black lines and uses large strokes of color, particularly dark ones. Several of his paintings are Chinese faces, because "I have been analyzing the anatomy of Chi-



nese faces," Rugeles said.

His works talk about disintegration, the anatomy and the development of character, and the interaction of drawing and painting. Although "disintegration" is the theme of Rugeles' exhibit, it does not refer to fragmentation or disunity, but rather to the individual state

of humans. "Human beings are never static; there is constant movement," he said.

Disintegration also describes the artist's new project on the marriage between drawing and painting, with works that combine fluid charcoal lines with strong acrylic strokes that focus on the study of the anatomy of characters.

Rugeles said Chinese elements have permeated his pieces since he moved here in 2007. "China has changed, but its core cultural values remain," he said. Through contact with local artists, he has learned calligraphy and classical

## Upcoming

### Concert

**Vienna Philharmonic Concert**  
Who: Conducted by Zubin Mehta  
Where: National Grand Theater Concert Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District  
When: March 8-9, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 280-1,880 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

## Stage in April

### Concert

**China Philharmonic Orchestra 2008-2009 Music Festival**  
Who: Conducted by Paul Meyer  
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District  
When: April 5, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 50-680 yuan  
Tel: 6501 1854  
**Xue Wei Violin Recital**  
Where: National Grand Theater Concert Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District  
When: April 17, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 80-500 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

### Taking the Road Beijing Concert 2009

Who: Jonathan Lee, Wakin Chou, A Yue and Lo Tayu  
Where: Beijing Workers Gymnasium, Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: April 18, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 280-1,680 yuan  
Tel: 6417 7845

### Chanson Concert

Who: William Sheller  
Where: Zhongshan Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), Dongcheng District  
When: April 19, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 30-380 yuan  
Tel: 6559 8306

### Bertrand Chamayou Piano Recital

Where: Beijing University Centennial Memorial Hall, 116 Zhongguancun Bei Dajie, Haidian District  
When: April 25, 7 pm  
Admission: 80-150 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

### Mantovani Orchestra China Tour - Beijing Concert

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang District  
When: April 28-29, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan  
Tel: 6501 1854

### Dance

#### Juliette Binoche and Akram Khan

Where: Mei Lanfang Grand Theater, 48 Hepingli Dajie, Xicheng District  
When: April 3-5, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan  
Tel: 5833 1218

#### Oliver Twist

Who: British TNT Theater  
Where: Beijing University Centennial Memorial Hall, 116 Zhongguancun Bei Dajie, Haidian District  
When: April 17-19, 7 pm  
Admission: 80-200 yuan  
Tel: 6275 8452

### Opera

**Tosca**  
Who: Directed by Lang Kun  
Where: National Grand Theater Opera Hall (west side of the Great Hall of the People), Xicheng District  
When: April 15-18, 7:30 pm  
Admission: 100-880 yuan  
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Li Jing)

## 5 Friday, March 6

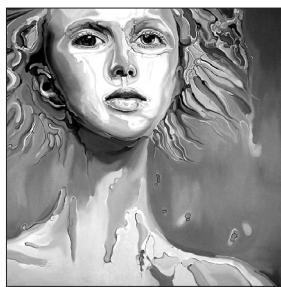
### Exhibition

**Sentiment**  
Five contemporary artists exhibit their

latest works.

Where: New Millennium Gallery, 3818 Warehouse, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 26, daily 10:30 am - 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6432 4122



### Movie

#### Defiance

Where: 1905 Film Club, 23 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 2 pm  
Admission: 10 yuan  
Tel: 6591 8189

#### Rice People

Where: French Culture

Center, 1/F Guangcai International Mansion, 18 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 7:30 pm  
Admission: 20-30 yuan  
Tel: 6553 2627

### Nightlife

#### Black Cat Bone

Where: Yugong Yishan, 3 Zhangzizhong Lu, Xicheng District

When: 9:30 pm  
Admission: 40 yuan  
Tel: 6404 2711

#### Oasis Tribute

Local bands dedicate the night to Oasis with songs from their albums *Escape Plan*, *Rolling Rolling and Self-portrait*.

Where: MAO Live, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm  
Cost: 60 yuan  
Tel: 6417 7845

#### Second Hand Rose

With cross-dressing diva Liang Long as band leader, Second Hand Rose plays rock music with strong folk influences.

Where: D-22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Wudaokou, Haidian District

When: 9 pm  
Admission: 80 yuan  
Tel: 6265 3177

## 6 Saturday, March 7

### Exhibition

**Continue Chaotic Code - You Jin Solo Exhibition**

Where: EGG Gallery, 327 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District  
When: Until May 30, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6432 8089

#### Gu Dexin Solo Exhibition

Where: Beijing Center for the Arts, Legation Quarter, 23 Qianmen Dong Dajie, Chongwen District

When: Until April 3, daily 10 am - 10 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6559 8008

#### Navy Blue

Where: PIFO New Art Studios, B-07 Beijing International Art Camp, Suojia-



cun, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District

When: Until March 18, daily 10 am - 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6437 1792

### Movie

#### The Visitor

Where: 1905 Film Club, 23 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 2 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan  
Tel: 6591 8189

## 7 Sunday, March 8

### Exhibition

#### In the Mood for Paper

Where: F2 Gallery, 319 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District  
When: Until April 20, daily except Monday and Tuesday, 10 am - 6 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6432 8831

#### Nu Red (Women's Red) - Joint Exhibition

Five artists from China, Japan and Australia display their newest creations.

Where: Imagine Gallery, 8 Art Studio, Feijiacun Dong Lu, Cuigezhuang, Laiguangying Dong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until October 17, daily except Monday, 10:30 am - 5:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 6438 5747

### Movie

#### The Duchess

Where: 1905 Film Club, 23 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District  
When: 2 pm  
Admission: 15 yuan  
Tel: 6591 8189

#### Teeth

Where: Sculpting in Time, 37 Xueyuan Lu, Haidian District  
When: 2-4:30 pm  
Admission: Free  
Tel: 8231 0662





# Keep your children free of obesity, cancer

By Zhang Dongya

Cancer will supplant heart disease as the world's leading killer by 2010, according to the latest report by the World Health Organization (WHO). Being overweight or obese has been shown to increase the risk of cancer, a disease hardly confined to the adult world.

On World Cancer Day, February 4, the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) held an event called "I love my healthy active childhood," the second full-year theme in its "Today's children, tomorrow's world" cancer prevention campaign.

Its aim is to raise public awareness worldwide of the link among diet, physical activity and obesity with the development of cancer, and to encourage children to incorporate a healthy diet and regular exercise into their daily lives.

Since children are unaware of the problems, it falls to the parents to control their weight and help them form a healthy lifestyle.



## Dangerous obesity epidemic

The prevalence of obesity in adults is skyrocketing around the world. Most parents spoil their kids with junk food, which is a big cause of obesity. Also, mothers who eat junk food during pregnancy and breastfeeding will have children prone to obesity. These children will prefer foods high in fat, salt and sugar.

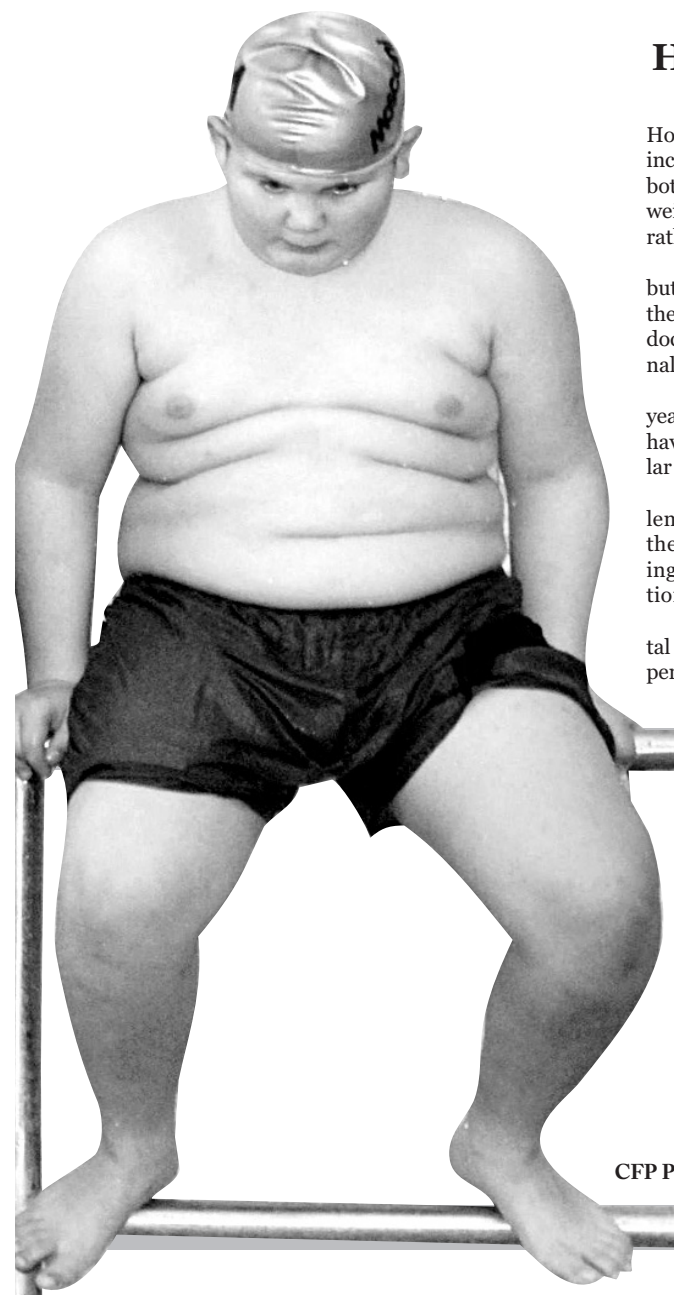
According to the WHO, 1 billion adults are overweight, and at least 300 million of them are clinically obese. The International Obesity Taskforce estimates that one out of every 10 school-age children is overweight. Of these, around 30 to 45 million children, about three percent of children aged five to 17, are obese.

According to the World Cancer Research Fund

Hong Kong (WCRF HK), there is a close link between cancer and body fat. "The evidence is convincing that being overweight is a cause of cancer of the esophagus, pancreas, uterus, kidneys and post-menopausal breast cancer. It is also a probable cause of cancer of the gallbladder," the WCRF HK said on its Web.

"Among different types of childhood cancer, the leading one is leukemia, followed by malignant brain tumors," Zhang Guangchao, the secretary-general of Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (CACA), said.

As the most common cancer in children, leukemia can be acute or chronic. Besides the genetic factors, it has been linked to environmental pollution, viral infection, obesity and exposure to ultraviolet radiation.



## How to help children lose weight

Not all fat children have weight problems as adults. However, children's risk of remaining overweight increases with age. The risk is even higher if one or both parents are overweight. If your child is overweight, it is important to deal with the issue sooner rather than later.

It is easy to judge whether your child is fat or thin, but you need to turn to the doctor to isolate whether the child is overweight, obese or morbidly obese. The doctor will examine the child's height, weight, external fat, blood glucose and blood fat.

"Obese children are only diagnosed after three years of age, so there is no rush to take action if you have a fat toddler," Zhi Xiuyi, the director of the Popular Science Department of CACA, said.

After your child is diagnosed with a weight problem, it can be a slow battle to help him or her shed the pounds. Unlike adults, children are still growing, so fast ways to lose weight, like diet or medications, are unsafe.

There are two types of childhood obesity: congenital and acquired. The former, which accounts for 20 percent of obese children, is genetic. It is harder for

these children to lose weight, and most of their fat is accumulated while in the womb. There is convincing evidence that breastfeeding protects the mother against breast cancer, and protects the child against obesity later in life, which is in turn linked to a higher cancer risk.

Children who get fat after birth are usually the product of an unhealthy diet and bad eating habits. The only effective and safe solution is to provide a healthy diet and encourage exercise.

Parents should pay close attention to food labels to ensure they are low in calories and push the whole family to eat healthy, so the fat child is not isolated. Consider stocking up more fresh fruits and vegetables instead of energy-dense food, which will help children feel full and discourage overeating.

Parents should also encourage their children to exercise. Consider exercising as a family by bike riding, having long walks and skating together. Encourage your kids to join school sports teams. Children need role models, and parents are their first role models, so limit the time your children watch TV and instead go outside.

## Dos and don'ts

1. Do try to make exercise fun for your child, instead of hard and forced training.
2. Don't put too much focus on the child's weight. Make sure you praise your child for his or her strengths and strive to build self-esteem.
3. Don't take away all junk food from the house. Instead, try a 90/10 approach – 90 percent healthy food and 10 percent junk foods, to decrease the risk of your child refusing to stick to the plan.

CFP Photos





The carved brick gate of No. 15, Dongmianhua Hutong

CFP Photo

Beijing's *siheyuan* or courtyard houses need no big introduction, just like Peking Duck or The Forbidden City, without which the Chinese capital would not be the city that we have come to know. These ancient residences are practically in our backyards, so many people take them for granted. But if you're longing for a bit of Old Beijing, not to mention some outdoor exercise, visit some hutong and take a closer look at these courtyard houses.

# Survivors, victims and storytellers

## A tour of Dongcheng's siheyuan

### A typical siheyuan

A siheyuan is a courtyard surrounded by four buildings. In ancient times, a spacious siheyuan would be occupied by a single, usually large and extended family, signifying wealth and prosperity. A standard courtyard residence faces south, its four sides lined with buildings connected by corridors. There is an *yingbi* or screen wall opposite the gate or just inside the gate.

A siheyuan usually has two courtyards, one in the front and the other at the back. A big siheyuan, however, can have as many as five courtyards laid out in the north-south direction. Courtyards can be built transverse as well, and some even have gardens.

The room on the north side, or the main room, is called *zhengfang*; the rooms on the west and east sides are called *xiangfang*, and that on the south, *dao zuo*. In traditional families, old people occupy the *zhengfang*; the eldest sons are given the eastern *xiangfang*, while the younger sons have the western *xiangfang*. Daughters live in the backyard and housekeepers in the *dao zuo*.



The siheyuan on lots 63 and 65 Dongmianhua Hutong



Chong Li's Residence in Dongsiliutiao Hutong is a key national protected relic. CFP Photo

### Dongsiliutiao

A big siheyuan is split across lots Nos 63 and 65 of the Dongsiliutiao Hutong in Dongcheng District. The courtyards on the east and west contain rooms, while the one in the middle has a garden. The main courtyard is the one on the east side.

The siheyuan used to be a residence of Chong Li, a scholar during the reign of Emperor Guangxu (1871-1908) in the Qing Dynasty (1636-1912). Li was neither very talented nor did he have any extraordinary achievements, but his career prospered because Empress Cixi (1835-1908) favored him. Taking advantage of his government office, he amassed wealth during a posting in Guangdong Province. Upon his return to Beijing, he bought the property and lavishly renovated it. It became the most luxurious siheyuan among officials at that time, second only to the princes'.

It has an opera stage, ancestral temples, a rock garden and pavilions. Well-preserved is a wooden door on which renowned Qing-Dynasty calligrapher Deng Shiru carved a poem by Su Shi, of the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127).

#### Getting there:

Lots 63 and 65 Dongsiliutiao Hutong  
Take Buses 24 or 674 and get off at Dongsiliutiao.

### Dongmianhua

On No 15 Dongmianhua Hutong is a typical siheyuan with three courtyards built in the north-south direction. But it is notable for its exquisitely carved brick.

It used to belong to General Liu Fengshan, a military official in the late Qing Dynasty. Liu, who was extremely wealthy, owned almost all the houses and courtyards in the eastern part of Mianhua Hutong. When Liu died in the early Minguo Period (1912-1949), his assets were sold.

The siheyuan's original appearance is gone, but the carved brick archway, though old and partly-damaged, remains. The archway, which used to be the siheyuan's second gate, depicts patterns of plants and animals. On the stone board above it are carvings of pine, bamboo and plum blossoms, called *Suihansanyou* or "three plant friends who thrive in cold weather." Many people visit just to see the beautiful archway.

#### Getting there:

No 15 Dongmianhua Hutong  
Take Buses 104, 108, 113, 635 or 701 and get off at Jiaodaokou.

Continued on page 21...



... continued from page 20

## Mao'er

This courtyard residence used to be the garden of a large siheyuan, built by Wen Yu, a scholar during the Emperor Guangxu Period in the Qing Dynasty. It was divided into several courtyards marked with doorplate numbers. The western part of the siheyuan contained living quarters; the middle part had a garden; and the eastern part was allotted for servants.

The garden named Keyuan was modeled after the Zhuozhengyuan, or the Humble Administrator's Garden, and the Shizilin, or the Lion Forest Garden, in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province. In the Minguo Period, Western-style architectural structures were added. Eventually, people built a gate especially for the garden, creating the present siheyuan.

After 1949, it housed the North Korean embassy. Now, it is a dormitory for a local company. The siheyuan's original buildings and basic layout have been preserved, but its current residents have added more kitchens.

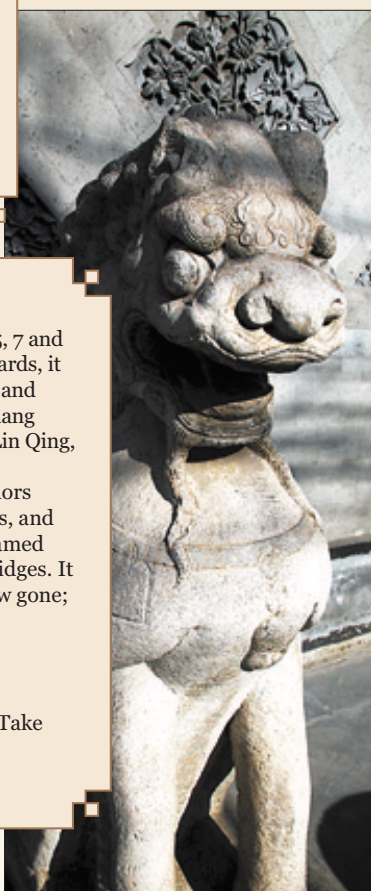
### Getting there:

No 9 Mao'er Hutong

Take Buses 105, 634, 653, 332 or 106 and get off at Luoguxiang. A few minutes on foot is Mao'er Hutong.



Lot no 9 Mao'er Hutong used to be a garden.



This statue stands at the gate of lot 129 Lishi Hutong.

## Huangmi

Qing-Dynasty painter Li Yu built the siheyuan on lots 5, 7 and 9 Huangmi Hutong for a person named Jia Hanfu. Afterwards, it became a *huiguan*, or base of a provincial or county guild, and then an opera theater. During the reign of Emperor Daoguang (1782-1850) in the Qing Dynasty, a high-ranking official, Lin Qing, purchased it.

The siheyuan has four courtyards connected by corridors carved with bats, deer, pines, bamboo and plum blossoms, and it has nine daozi rooms. Lin built a garden, which he named Banmuyuan, with pavilions, rock gardens, streams and bridges. It became a well-known private garden in Qing, but it is now gone; only the siheyuan's living quarters remain.

### Getting there:

Lots 5, 7 and 9 Huangmi Hutong

Huangmi Hutong is next to Meishuguan Dong Dajie. Take buses 103, 111, 814 or 101 and get off at Meishuguan.



Nos. 5, 7, and 9. It was the famous garden named Banmuyuan in Beijing.

## Lishi

Lishi Hutong, whose name changed from Lüshi Hutong in the Minguo Period, has a large siheyuan with three gates on its No. 29 lot. On both sides of the gates are exquisite carvings.

The siheyuan has two courtyards connected by a cloister, or a covered passage with one side walled and the other an open arcade. A garden, a pool and pavilions were built in the eastern courtyard.

Bin Jun, an official of Wuchang, Hubei Province in the late Qing Dynasty, used to live here. Then, it was bought by a businessman from Japan, Li Yanqing, who

made his fortune by selling rice during the massive earthquake in Japan in 1923. The property passed to and was redesigned by Li Songchen, the son of another big businessman named Li Shanren.

After 1949, the siheyuan housed the Indonesian embassy. It has since been turned into offices for the China Youth Daily newspaper.

### Getting there:

No 129 Lishi Hutong

Take Buses 101, 109, 110, 420 or 846 and get off at Chaoyangmen Nei Xiaojie. Walk south through Qian-guaibang Hutong, and at the end is Lishi Hutong.

## Ju'er

Most of the buildings in the hutong used to be owned by Rong Lu, a big name in the Qing imperial government.

Rong's property in Ju'er Hutong used to run from the middle of the lane to its east end. The siheyuan on lots 3 and 5 are made up of Western-style buildings, a garden and a residential section, which alone has five courtyards. Two courtyards used to be ancestral temples, but nothing of the original structures remain except for a Western-style building. Several dormitories were built on the lot when a local company moved in.

### Getting there:

Lots 3 and 5 Ju'er Hutong

Take Buses 104, 107 or 113 and get off at Jiadaokou.

(By Jackie Zhang)



Lot no. 129 Lishi Hutong CFP Photos



# Mirroring and Matching



By Morry Morgan

"We like people who are like us." I first came across this phrase when I was studying Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP).

This expression, which is also known as the "chameleon effect," refers to the unconscious attraction toward people who are similar to us, whether they be related by nationality, gender or body language. Since the 1970s, social science researchers have known that we view people who mimic our body language more favorably than those who do not. What is even more interesting is that this effect holds true for our interactions with artificial people as well.

Stanford University researchers tested subjects who interacted with an artificial man or woman in a virtual reality computer simulation. The artificial characters either mimicked the subtle head movements of the participants after a four-second delay or displayed head movements recorded from a previous session with another participant. Results indicated that the artificial characters that mimicked the head movements of the participants were rated as more persuasive and likable than those virtual characters that did not. Of further interest was that only eight out of 69 participants consciously detected the mimicry. In this study on the chameleon effect, the research was to be used to improve computer game characters. However, it can also be used to get a job or build comfort in a sales meeting.

Claudia, my colleague in Beijing, and I went to meet Sally from a large multi-

national company. While Claudia had met Sally on a number of occasions, this was my first visit, and from Sally's body language, I could tell that she was not comfortable. Firstly, I was new, and secondly we were speaking in my native language, not hers.

From the outset, I began to mirror her and in doing so I hoped that I would make her more comfortable, and

build *Goodwill*. That happened quickly. What I didn't expect was that my colleague, Claudia, would unconsciously try to break rapport with Sally by exhibiting an "anti-mirror" posture. Sally was leaning back, but Claudia was leaning forward, meanwhile I looked on and hoped Claudia would realize that she was building a wall between her and her client. But, to my surprise, Sally didn't let that

happen. Her unconscious reaction was to mirror Claudia in response. Claudia had unintentionally, but successfully, *Paced* and then *Lead* Sally.

Pacing and Leading is a simple test to measure your level of comfort with another person. At first you *Mirror and match* the subject, by replicating their body posture while at the same time *Matching* your tone of voice and words to theirs. After a few minutes, you then change both, but slowly. If they are leaning back, as was the case with Sally, you lean forward. If they are talking softly, you slowly raise your volume. In the world of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) this is referred to as Pacing. If you have built enough rapport with the subject then you will successfully reverse the relationship. The "mirrored" becomes the "mirroree," if there is such a word, and you have successfully *Lead* the subject.

The sheer fact that Claudia had *Paced* and *Lead* Sally into mirroring her own posture told me that Sally was comfortable with Claudia. *Goodwill* was extremely high. To them it was only visible on an unconscious level, but it was completely visible to me. I, of course, continued my conscious mirroring and so by the end of the meeting, we were all leaning forward, elbows on the desk waving our hands around as we explained our concepts.

Claudia may have had no idea, but that didn't matter. The contract was signed and there was no need to negotiate on price.

Morry Morgan is a sales and negotiation trainer for ClarkMorgan Corporate Training. He is the author of "Negotiating with Chinese Characteristics."

CFP Photo



## Dining

### Hell's Kitchen in Provincia

It's the perfect time to invite the devil inside to come out and play at Provincia's Hell's Kitchen, Beijing's first bar and kitchen theater. Chef Blain's Sexy Devil Helpers will be stoking the flames and serving up pizzas. The female house DJ will be banging hellish beats so you can show your bad moves on the dance

### Prince of Beef

The Summer Palace introduces the prince of beef, Chinese Wagyu: beautifully marbled, strikingly succulent and outstandingly tasty. Experience the wondrous ways of Chinese Wagyu beef from Cantonese master chef Stanley Yuen and Huiyang head chef Xin

### Celebrate Secretary's Week

Celebrate in style at the CBD where the chefs will serve it up this Secretary's Week. Distinctive lunch special buffet awaits you that will make you wish your plates were bigger.

Where: CBD, Grand Millennium

floor. Come dressed devilish and the first round of drinks are on the house.

Where: Beijing Marriott Hotel City Wall, 7 Jianguomen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: March 13, 8 pm - 1 am

Cost: 35 yuan

Tel: 5811 8266

Qing Hou.

Where: Summer Palace, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: March 1-31

Tel: 6505 5838

### Buy one Get one Free

Invite your loved one or business partner for lunch or dinner and enjoy international delicacies. Swissotel Beijing has prepared a fabulous dining deal where two can eat for the price of one.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 11:30 am - 2:30 pm, Monday - Friday (buffet lunch); 6-10 pm, weekends (buffet dinner excluding beverages)

Cost: 198 yuan for lunch, 228 yuan



for dinner (subject to 15 percent service charge)

Tel: 65532288 ext. 2127

## Hotel

### Aloft aloha girl campaign

Aloft hotels announced the launch of its aloft aloha girl campaign which continues throughout the month. Visitors can go to alofthotels.com/alohagirl to vote for who they think best represents the modern woman traveler. Voters can win weekly accommodations, cocktail treats at wxyz bar, a grand prize of a four-day adventure in Beijing and a Nano ipod. The hotel is offering a package which includes free entry to aloft's Weekly Activities.

Where: aloft Beijing Haidian, Tower 2, 25 Yuanda Lu, Haidian District

Cost: 488 yuan for a single room and

588 yuan for a double (before March 15), 558 yuan for a single room and 628 yuan for a double (March 16 - April 30)

Tel: 8889 8000

### Fairmont Hotels & Resorts makes historic entry

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, a global hospitality leader with a distinctive collection and worldwide reputation for excellence, is making its landmark entry into China with the opening of the Fairmont Beijing.

The Fairmont Beijing will offer 222 superb guest rooms and suites. Each room features cutting-edge technology

with state-of-the-art support. For the ultimate in relaxation, a visit to Fairmont Beijing's Willow Stream Spa provides the ideal sky-high rejuvenation. The hotel will also offer innovative dining options, each of which will be a unique experience.

It has three state-of-the-art meeting rooms. The main Jin Yu Hutong room can accommodate up to 180 guests, while the spectacular multi-use theatre can accommodate up to 200 guests. The concierge, personalized services and themed dining rooms make each meeting, conference or seminar a memorable occasion.

Where: 8 Yong'an Dongli, Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

## Aviation

### Ayubowan Sri Lanka Packages

SriLankan Airlines is offering Ayubowan Sri Lanka Packages through the end of the month. The packages are offered in partnership with 15 local tour operators and start from as little as 5,988 yuan per person, which includes return air fare in economy class, all taxes,

airport transfers, accommodations in a star-rated hotel, transportation in air-conditioned vehicles, English-speaking chauffeurs for parties of up to six and Mandarin-speaking guides for parties of over seven. Discount rates are available for children.

Tel: 8511 7777

### New appointment at Grand Hyatt

Foued El Mabrouk has been appointed general manager of the Grand Hyatt Beijing at Oriental Plaza. He replaces Christopher Koehler, who has been transferred to the Grand Hyatt Shanghai. With 20 years' experience in the hotel industry, mainly in sales and marketing, Foued has been with the Grand Hyatt Beijing since it opened in 2001, when he was the director of marketing. He was promoted to resident manager in 2007.

(By Sun Feng)



**Chinglish story**

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

# Finding the right steak and the Statue of Liberty

By Annie Wei

Last weekend, two high school friends from the south were in town on a business trip. Zheng Tao, who is in the steel business, has lived in our hometown all his life. Meng Li went abroad a few years ago and now works for a local financial consulting firm.

Like many men from southern China, Zheng was not into Western food. But Meng could not get away from her meetings, so the best thing we could do was dine at her hotel. Meng and I wanted to try the hotel's steak house, and Zheng did not have a choice.

The waiter came over and said, "How would you like your steak done?"

Meng said, "Medium, please."

Medium was fine with me too.

When it was Zheng's turn to order, he said, "Large, please."

The waiter faltered for a second and said, "Sorry we don't have that."

Zheng said, "Small please."

The waiter said, "Sorry, but we don't have that either."

Meng lost her patience and told Zheng in our hometown dialect, "He is asking you how you want your steak done."

Zheng said, "70 percent then."

The waiter said, "Sorry, we don't have that."

Finally, we told the waiter Zheng wanted his steak done "medium-well." Zheng got very upset from embarrassment.

Meng tried to comfort Zheng by sharing with us an embarrassing experience she had with the English language while visiting New York for the first time.

She was trying to find out how to get to the Statue of Liberty, so she asked a teenager at random on the street. "Hi, do you know where the free woman is?"

The young man stared at her in surprise, then finally said, "I don't know ... but tell me when you figure it out."

We all burst into laughter.

Meng said, "We call the statue the Liberty Goddess in Chinese, in which the words 'liberty' and 'freedom' are used interchangeably. But when you apply the same rule to English, you end up saying something entirely different."



CFP Photo

**Chinglish on the way**

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

## Time makes an alien land your homeland

By Tiffany Tan

Humans have always feared an alien invasion, but the last time I checked, there were no plans yet for our own large-scale invasion of outer space. So what kind of Chinglish sign do we have on our hands, you may ask.

This sign is technically not "Chinglish," if we mean English that gets mangled in translation or expression. The Chinese words roughly mean the same thing – that the passage of time makes "another place" akin to one's hometown. Where would you

see such a sign? And who would put it there in the first place? I asked three Chinese colleagues in my search for context, but they were as clueless as I was.

Guess who had the answer? A co-worker from the US who has done his fair share of Chinglish write-ups. "That just means 'Don't step on the grass,'" he said, adding that Chinese people try to come up with such "witty" and "attention-grabbing" park signs all the time. The humor may have been too alien this time around.

**Blacklist**

*Beijing Today* has come up with Blacklist, a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then this page is your new best friend. Watch out for it each week.

### Local professor: Zhu Shida

#### 1. Whether you are single or dating, Valentine's Day is a perfect opportunity to make a romantic dream come true.

You must be aware that the "whether" clause is sometimes a noun clause. For instance, in the sentence "Whether I shall go to Beijing remains undecided," "Whether I shall go to Beijing" is a noun clause serving as the subject. For an adverbial clause, you better use the "no matter whether" pattern. In this case, you will say, "No matter whether you are single or dating, Valentine's Day is a perfect opportunity to make a romantic dream come true." The meaning is clearer.

#### 2. Within 10 minutes of the cafe

In measuring the time to go to or from a place, the typical way to say it would be, "within a 10-minute walk of the cafe." It means either to the cafe or from the cafe. But, you will have to say "a 10-minute walk," which is a measure of the time needed as an expression of distance.

#### 3. With more and more people opting to settling in the country

You usually "opt to do something," which means you "choose to do something." You never say "opting to doing something." For the verb "to opt," you have the phrase "to opt for," which means "to decide to choose." For example, The people of the colonies opted for independence. An expression that means the opposite is "to opt out," which means "to choose to back out, withdraw or resign." For instance, She makes excuses to opt out of her tasks.

### Native speaker: Penny Turner

#### 1. Whether you are single or dating, Valentine's Day is a perfect opportunity to make a romantic dream come true.

Adding "no matter" to the beginning of the sentence does make its sentiment come across more strongly, but the original sentence is also grammatically correct. Sentence patterns to express the same idea would be, "No matter if you are single or dating ..." and "It does not matter whether you are single or dating ..."

#### 2. Within 10 minutes of the cafe

Since the phrase does not specify the mode of getting to the cafe, you have to add the specifics, like Professor Zhu suggested. Another way to express "within a 10-minute walk" would be to say "10 minutes on foot to/from the cafe." But what if it's 10 minutes by bike or 10 minutes by car? You can say "within 10 minutes by bicycle/car" or "a 10-minute bicycle/car ride away."

#### 3. With more and more people opting to settling in the country

I agree with Professor Zhu's explanation, and thus the phrase should be rewritten this way: "With more and more people opting to settle in the country ..."





# Valkyrie (2008)

## Hitler oath:

I swear by God this sacred oath that I shall **render unconditional obedience to (1)** Adolf Hitler, the Fuhrer of the German Reich and people, supreme commander of the armed forces, and that I shall at all times be ready, as a brave soldier, to give my life for this oath.



### Movie of the week

Tom Cruise is back, and World War II history buffs can safely ignore the naysayers who have declared *Valkyrie* a flop. The movie is a pleasant surprise based on the American interpretation of the July 20 Plot against Hitler. Although its historical nature makes the ending already known and the movie develops at a slow pace, it still creates a suspenseful and dark atmosphere that will keep you captivated until the end.

In terms of scope, location and battle scenes, one cannot ask for more from a WWII movie.

### Synopsis

Many saw evil. Few dared to stop it.

The "July 20 Plot" on Hitler's life is one of the most heroic and least known episodes of WWII. Severely wounded in combat, Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg (Cruise) returns from Africa to join the German Resistance and help create Operation Valkyrie, a complex plan that will allow a shadow government to replace Hitler's once he is dead.

But fate and circumstance conspired to thrust Stauffenberg from one of many in the plot to a double-edged central role. Not only must he lead the coup and seize control of his nation's government ... he must personally kill Hitler.

## Vocabulary

- 1. render obedience to:** show loyalty to someone
- 2. SS:** short for Schutzstaffel, German for "protective shield," a special Nazi security force
- 3. one with bullets:** here means one with war experience
- 4. be critical of:** to call attention to errors in something
- 5. stick onto:** to retain
- 6. count one in:** to include
- 7. scared half to death:** to become very frightened

(By Huang Daohen)

## Scene 1: South African field

(Stauffenberg writes in his diary at a camp on a South African field.)

The promises of peace and prosperity had been neglected. Most of us have started to be aware of the outrages committed by Hitler's **SS (2)**: the murderer of civilians, torture and starvation of prisoners, the mass execution of Jews. My duty as an officer is no longer to save my country, but to save human lives. I cannot find a single general in the position to confront Hitler with the courage to do it. I found myself surrounded by men unwilling to face the truth. Hitler is not only the arch-enemy of the entire world but the arch-enemy of Germany. Change must be made.

## Scene 2: Fromm's office

**General Fromm (F):** What is it you want?

**Olbricht (O):** I want to introduce you to our new man. Colonel Stauffenberg.

**F:** Ah, from Africa. I would offer you my hand, but I might not get it back.

**Stauffenberg (S):** I think it's the least important thing for General this morning.

**F:** It is about time to put **somebody with bullets (3)** into this office. Please sit down, Colonel. And you too, Olbricht. They tell me that you **are critical of (4)** the

war; Colonel, and I'm curious. There has to be good reason.

**S:** I am critical of the decisions, general.

**F:** In the field?

**S:** In Berlin.

**F:** So that's why you are here to make decisions.

**S:** I have already made my decision. I am



here to help others make theirs.

**F:** They say that when there is no clear option, the best thing is to do nothing.

**S:** We are at war, we must act. Sometimes, rashly.

**F:** And what rash actions do you have in your mind, Colonel?

**S:** That would be a decision for the Supreme military commander, sir.

**F:** The Supreme Commander?

**S:** The second only to the Chancellor.

**F:** If I was that man, this war would be going quite differently.

**O:** Well, we were thinking the

same thing.

**F:** I do not need to remind you that we've all sworn oath to the Fuhrer. Having said that, I'm going to forget that this conversation ever took place, and **stick onto (5)** the understanding that such talk never recurs again under this roof. Is that clear?

**S&O:** Yes.

**F:** And you can tell your friends, Colonel, that I always come down on the right side. And as long as the Fuhrer is alive, you know what side that is.

## Scene 3: Stauffenberg's office

(General Olbricht has found a new assistant, Werner von Haeften, for Stauffenberg.)

**Stauffenberg (S):** Close the door. Be seated.

**Haeften (H):** Hi-Hitler.

**S:** Do you know how this war will end, Lieutenant? The poacher will be unhung, and the man will be hung.

(Stauffenberg stares at the picture of Hitler on the wall.)

**S:** I am involved in high treason with all means available to me. Can I **count you in (6)?**

**Haeften (H):** For anything, sir. Anything at all.

**S:** Anything is a very dangerous word, Lieutenant. You might be **scared half to death (7)**.

**H:** We won't be closer than that before we're finished.

## Scene 4: Hitler's residence

**General Fromm (F):** My Fuhrer, may I present Colonel Stauffenberg to you from the staff of the Reserve Army.

**Stauffenberg (S):** My Fuhrer.

**Hitler (H):** I was so honored to meet an officer who has sacrificed so much for Germany. No fame matches a man like you. (Hitler turns to the officers) This man standing here makes an example for all of you. He is an ideal of German officer.

**F:** My Fuhrer, the reason Colonel Stauffenberg came with us here today is to brief us on mobilizing the troops of the Reserve Army to repel the invasion.

**H:** Invasion?

**S:** Normandy, my Fuhrer.

**H:** Ah yes. Normandy. This will be not necessary. The chiefs of the Reich inform me that everything is under control. Thank you, Colonel.

**S:** My Fuhrer, if I may, I have an amended copy of Operation Valkyrie, for approval.

**H:** You know Valkyrie, Colonel? The Valkyrie dealt with the maidens of the gods, choosing who will live and who will die, inspiring the most heroic and iconizing death. One cannot understand that operation, if one does not understand Valkyrie.